

**Minutes of Histon & Impington Parish Council Finance, Governance & Legal Committee
Monday 4th December 2023 at 7.30pm at the Community Room at the Recreation Ground**

Finance, Governance & Legal Committee Minutes

Membership: 6 + 2

Quorum: 3

Appendices: 5

Agenda No:	Present: Cllrs Neil Davies, David Legge, James Leonard, Denis Payne, Ex-officio: Cllrs Edd Stonham (Chair of Committee), Yvonne Murray (Vice Chair of Committee). Clerk for the meeting: Theresa King (RFO) 2 vacancies	
F23/045 045.1	To Receive Apologies for Absence None	
F23/046 046.1	MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (for items on the agenda) Cllr Davies declared a pecuniary interest in 054.1 Friends of Histon & Impington Community – Charity Manager Cllr Payne declared a pecuniary interest in 054.1 Friend of Histon & Impington Community – spouse paid employee of HI Friends Cllrs Stonham declared non-pecuniary interest in item 054.1. Friend of Histon & Impington Community - Trustee.	
F23/047 047.1	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION Two members of the public present.	
F23/048 048.1 048.2	APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 31st July 2023 (Appx 1) and 25th September 2023 (Appx 2) Minutes of the meeting of 31st July 2023; Proposed Cllr Davies, seconded Cllr Murray, all in favour to accept, 1 abstention. Minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2023; Proposed Cllr Davies, seconded Cllr Murray, all in favour to accept, 3 abstentions.	
F23/049 049.1	MATTERS ARISING Agenda List after meeting 250923 circulated (Appx 3). Report noted, items discussed as follows: <u>Item F22/009.2 Purchase Card Reader:</u> Cllr Payne asked for a date in the future to be entered rather than being left blank.	RFO
F23/050 050.1	To receive, Review and Accept RFO's Report (Appx 4) Report noted. Cllr Davies suggested a review of investments should include moving more monies into long term deposit accounts to increase income from interest, possibly with quarterly top ups to spread the amount saved. He also queried if there were any external body that could offer advice on investment. Investment review to be undertaken after precept setting (post January 2024) so projects in three year plans can be considered.	
F23/051 051.1	Transparency code: To agree that the Committee acknowledges that, since Council turnover exceeds £200K, the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 apply. The first publication to meet the annual requirements will be in April 2024. Publication to meet the quarterly requirements will be January 2024, if judged feasible and appropriate, but will be April 2024 at the latest. Cllr Payne outlined reporting requirements; spend over £500 quarterly, Land ownership annually. Proposed Cllr Payne, seconded Cllr Legge, all in favour and agreed.	
F23/052 052.1	To create a policy and process for setting up of reserves (Appendix 5) Draft policy circulated. Cllr Payne highlighted current reserves where the reason for their	

<p>052.2</p>	<p>creation was not known had driven this suggested policy in order to provide a process for review. Cllr Davies suggested policy should include a minimum initial amount for creation of the reserve. Cllr Payne suggested there would be no top up limits because it could be for a large project. Following acceptance of process, current reserves could be reviewed and money returned to general reserves where needed. Cllr Leonard asked if each reserve was owned by a committee, RFO explained that most specified reserves were but that Section 106 reserves were available across committees to be used for suitable projects. Cllr Payne outlined that the new process will allow projects to be considered to see if it qualifies for a reserve. RFO provided extract from "Borrowing, Precept Increases Policy" which stated use of reserves, Cllr Payne to review both policies and combine them as required to provide suitable policy. Once accepted by the committee, the policy will need to be presented to Full Council.</p> <p>To review current reserves and funds in line with new process Cllr Payne queried reserve 3240 Land Fund: wayleave might be the only legal agreement that would constrain the spending of the money. He also queried the 3010 Community Facilities, 3030 Community Space Reserve Fund, and 3040 Public Open Space Reserve Fund, suggesting funds could be returned to general reserves. Cllr Davies queried whether the Community Facilities reserve could contribute towards the Recreation Development Plan, Cllr Stonham thought that leaving as Community Facilities gave more flexibility for the use of the fund. Cllr Leonard asked if loans would be possible for large projects such as the Rec Development, and Cllr Payne confirmed public loans were available. Cllr Leonard also highlighted the need for recording of asset depreciation and replacement costs to provide information for future reserves. Reserves to be reviewed after precept setting. RFO to provide as much information on creation of reserves as is known.</p>	<p>DP/ Next agenda</p> <p>RFO Next Agenda</p>
<p>F23/053</p> <p>053.1</p> <p>053.2</p>	<p>To agree to engage agency workers for three months from January 2024 in order to enable a smooth handover between groundstaff and provide support whilst positions are filled Committee felt a limit was needed for this item, and wondered if established contractors could be asked to undertake roles. RFO outlined that agency workers would allow for better handover to staff while positions are being confirmed and advertised. Modified motion proposed: To agree, in principle, to engage agency workers for three months from January 2024 in order to enable a smooth handover between groundstaff and provide support whilst positions are filled, up to a limit of £10,000. Proposed Cllr Legge, seconded Cllr Payne, all in favour of modification to motion.</p> <p>Amended motion proposed Cllr Legge, seconded Cllr Payne, all in favour to agree.</p> <p>To approve spend to engage a surveyor to undertake a survey of 12 New Road, delegated to Office staff to engage surveyor, up to a budget of £1,000 plus VAT Cllr Legge suggested limit be increased to £1,500 to reflect rises in costs since last survey undertaken. Proposed Cllr Payne, seconded Cllr Legge, all in favour to agree, with budget raised to £1,500.</p>	
<p>F23/054</p> <p>054.1</p>	<p>Budget setting To review and agree Finance, Governance & Legal budget RFO outlined increases in request for funding from Connections Bus Project for youth work and breakdown across areas. Also receipt of request for additional funding for Highlights magazine.</p> <p>Standing Orders suspended.</p> <p>Member of public asked how youth work is evaluated, how are benefits defined. Cllr Payne said that it was considered against employing a youth worker in house, which had been previously attempted. Cllr Davies noted that even if we moved away from the Connections Bus Project we would still have to buy in a service. Cllr Payne said he had researched youth work with County Councillors, and they said there is no competing service in the county, no-one to replace that function currently. Cllr Davies asked if Romsey Mill had been considered. RFO said regular reports were received from the Connections Bus Project and these were circulated to Council.</p> <p>Standing Orders reinstated.</p>	

054.2	<p>The committee felt that the Youth budget line should fall under the Wellbeing, Recreation and Leisure (WRL) committee. The Highlights magazine request would be review in January at Full Council.</p> <p>Cllrs Payne, Davies and Stonham left the meeting. Cllr Murray took the Chair for this item. Cllr Legge noted that as funding requests were due to be considered at Full Council meeting that the budget could not be agreed, only noted. Item Deferred.</p> <p>To review First Draft of Committee Budgets and Requests to Date for Precept, including Capital Spend projects</p> <p>Spreadsheet presented to committee showing summary of all budget proposals including three year plans, and possible impact on spending and precept increases. RFO noted the inclusion of reserves for each committee for the first time this year, to allow the three year planning process to include these. RFO also noted three year planning process new to this council.</p> <p>Standing Orders suspended.</p> <p>Chair of WRL committee, Cllr Hobbs, invited to attend meeting. Cllr Hobbs commented that consideration of reserve increases and spend had been made for the replacement of play equipment, which was beginning to come to suggested end of life.</p> <p>Cllr Davies left the meeting, Standing orders reinstated.</p> <p>Cllr Stonham outlined additional spreadsheet looking at three year plan spends and top up of reserves, and additional Wishlist from some committees, noting the largest budget being that of the WRL Committee. Cllr Stonham agreed to undertake a “critical friend” review with each Committee chair to understand project proposals for three year plans, especially coming year, in order to create a list of projects which will better inform the need for capital funding. Cllr Stonham said he would also ensure all the projects are included for each committee, the closing date for the review being 22nd December. First draft noted, no decision made. Cllr Murray outlined that the undertaking of projects needed to consider the staff workload involved.</p>	<p>Full Council</p> <p>Next Agenda</p>
<p>F23/055</p> <p>055.1</p> <p>055.2</p>	<p>How to Communicate 4th December 2023 FG&L meeting on website</p> <p>Cllr Stonham and Cllr Murray to outline the Critical Friend process and highlight how Council is undertaking a different way of doing budgets, looking at three year plans.</p> <p>Items for next agenda: Agree FGL budget; To finalise Reserves policy and review current reserves; Following items to be deferred noting January meeting to set precept: To finalise updated Capital Bid process; Financial Risk Management Plan; To agree a Website Action Plan; To further review scope and objectives of committee and agree Terms of Reference; To receive update on central database to record projects and project leaders and agree next steps; To review grant and donations policy with recommendation for Full Council</p>	
F23/056	<p>Date of next meeting(s): 8th January 2024 (precept setting), 15th April 2024</p>	
	<p>Meeting Closed at 9.20 p.m.</p> <p>Appendix 1: Minutes of the meeting 31.07.23 Appendix 2: Minutes of the Meeting 25.09.23 Appendix 3: Agenda List after Appendix 4: RFO report Appendix 5: Draft reserves policy</p>	