

Minutes Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 11th September 2023 at 7.00pm.

Meeting start time 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs Mike Shepherd (Chairman), Robert Frost, and Coral Shepherd.

In attendance: Karen Orgill (Business Manager (BM)) Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker)

893 Apologies for absence – Cllr Brian Anderson

894 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item – None received

895 Public participation – No public present

896 Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 10th July 2023

a) To approve the Minutes

The minutes were approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

b) To review action list

The action list was reviewed with those completed removed.

c) To consider matters arising

Cllr M Shepherd asked if the new policy schedule and statement of fact had been placed on SharePoint as per minute number 887. The BM confirmed the current information was on SharePoint.

897 Current Financial Position

a) IAC reports – monthly report

Cllr M Shepherd said reports for July 2023 and August 2023 had been circulated via SharePoint.

He drew attention to point 11 of the July report. Although not part of his routine checking he did notice some significant mis-coding of some expenditure transactions which have now been corrected. He recommended that we revise our processes to ensure that no orders are placed without the authorising committee (or individuals) agree the expenditure code(s) to be used and staff ensure that information is communicated in writing to the RFO before she raises the order.

Cllr M Shepherd reported the IAC check for August had been carried out and the bank reconciliations for 01.04.23 to 31.08.23 are all in order and the financial reports are numerically correct. The mis-coding identified in July have been corrected but committees are requested to check their budgets in detail as soon as possible and on an ongoing basis. Cllr M Shepherd advised he had circulated the Budget Headings Transaction reports for Council, Grants and Project Reserves via SharePoint. These reports are useful as they show in detail each item of income and expenditure against budget codes. He suggested these be included with the monthly financial reports for each committee in future and this was agreed.

b) Whole council budgets

Cllr M Shepherd advised the Financial Budget Comparison reports had been circulated via SharePoint and there are no issues to report to the Committee.

c) Aged debtors

There are currently no Aged Debtors.

d) Reserves

Cllr M Shepherd advised the Reserves reports had been circulated via SharePoint.

898 IT update

(a) General update

Cllr M Shepherd advised there was nothing new to report. He asked if there was or had been any feedback either from staff or councillors regarding the new IT system, no feedback had been received.

Cllr M Shepherd said he was concerned the Councillor Library on SharePoint was not being used to its full potential and suggested a meeting to include Cllr C Shepherd, staff and himself take place to review how the Councillor Information Library is used.

(b) RFO hardware procurement and training

Cllr M Shepherd reported a new permanent RFO has been appointed by the Staffing Committee and is due to commence work 18th September 2023, it has been established that, although the new RFO has financial experience she has not used the EDGE Finance package and will therefore require training. Due to her location most of the work will be carried out from home and would therefore require the Parish Council to provide a suitable laptop. Cllr M Shepherd advised he had circulated the details of a laptop that would be suitable and proposed the following:

1. To procure a HP EliteBook 860 G10 16" Business Laptop (or near equivalent), carry case, Bluetooth Mouse, and five years onsite hardware support for use by the RFO at a cost of approximately £1,400.00
2. To procure an additional annual concurrent Edge licence for use by the RFO at a cost of £128.00 p/a
3. To arrange Edge Accounts training for the RFO as soon as possible.

Committee discussed the proposals. **It was resolved to approve the proposals.**

(c) Presentation of information for meetings

Cllr M Shepherd said the presentation of documents on SharePoint needed to be reviewed, it had been agreed previously it would be good practice to present documents in a consistent format to allow Councillors to easily locate items for meetings etc, this includes file names to be kept concise, sub folders to be consistent: with either a leading zero or spacing applied so items will run numerically, and emails to include any attachments received. All supporting documents for meetings should be provided prior to the meeting to allow Councillors to prepare ahead of the meeting.

(d) Staff and Councillor training requirements

Cllr M Shepherd asked if there were any IT training requirements for staff and/or councillors. The Business Manager suggested purchasing a councillor guide book that she had seen but had no further details. Cllr C Shepherd suggested that we should have a current edition of the Good Councillor Guide available on SharePoint. The BM was asked to contact Norfolk Parish Training and Support to obtain an electronic version of the most recent edition. Cllr M Shepherd asked if staff required any training in Word or Excel and suggested in house training be arranged for Councillors relating to budgeting and financial reports.

899 Business Manager Updates

Cllr M Shepherd stated that he was aware that many of the items below had not been completed for various reasons. He asked what suggestions the BM had to get the work

done within an acceptable timescale given competing pressures from other committees and routine work and available resources.

(a) Monthly status check of Defibrillators

The BM explained the defibrillators are checked monthly and a report placed on SharePoint and produced the report for the Committee to see. Cllr M Shepherd asked the BM to send the link to access the reports on SharePoint.

(b) Risk Register

(c) Contract Register

(d) Correction of Minute Referencing

(e) Publishing of Inspection Reports on SharePoint

The BM advised there is no update with regards to agenda items 7b, 7c, 7d and 7e due to emergency work and ongoing items for the Environment Committee which have taken priority and felt unable to specify a date for completion of the Finance Committee items. The Committee discussed possible solutions without reaching any conclusions Cllr C Shepherd proposed moving on to the next item and this was agreed.

900 Dersingham Recreation Ground Charity update.

Cllr M Shepherd said the Recreation Ground Charity has now been formally closed. Cllr C Shepherd confirmed the details have been removed from the Charity Commission website.

901 Correspondence

Cllr M Shepherd said a grant request had been received from West Norfolk Befriending however there had been specific amount requested, and there is currently £500.00 remaining in the Minor Grants budget. After discussion Cllr C Shepherd proposed a grant of £150.00 be made to West Norfolk Befriending. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.** The BM requested the budget code for the grant and said she would contact West Norfolk Befriending to obtain bank details. Cllr C Shepherd advised the budget code was 2015.

902 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

None received.

903 Date of next meeting – Monday 9th October 2023, 7pm in the Loft

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.50pm

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

904 Leases Update

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd reported the Sports Ground CIC have confirmed they will convert to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) called the Dersingham Sports Ground Association. Our solicitor has been contacted regarding the name change requirements to the Leases.

Cllr M Shepherd advised that the CIC had discussed their data storage for the pavilion project, and he had suggested a possible solution which was agreed by the committee.

b) Update on Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Lease

Cllr C Shepherd stated the Social Club have appointed a new Treasurer and August accounts have been submitted to the Parish Council.

With no further business the meeting close at 8.55pm

Action Points

Business Manger

- To review and update the Contracts Register as per the Internal Audit recommendations
- To review and update the Risk Register as per the Internal Audit recommendations
- To liaise with other parties as per minute 869(c) Supplier Due Diligence
- To establish defib battery life as per minute 888
- Place the new BHIB Policy Schedule and Statement of Fact (ensuring the Data Breach Response is included) onto SharePoint
- To contact Norfolk Parish Training and Support re Good Councillor Guide as per minute 898(d)
- To forward link to Cllr M Shepherd to the Defibrillator monthly check.
- To contact West Norfolk Befrienders re Grant as per minute 901

Cllr C Shepherd

- To contact a specialist roofing/safety company for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.
- To liaise with Cllr M Shepherd/Barclays regarding obtaining a new purchase card.