

Minutes Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

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

In attendance: Karen Orgill (Business Manager (BM)) Geraldine Scanlon (Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker) and Jo MacCallum (Responsible Finance Officer (RFO))

- 1 **Apologies for absence** – Cllrs Brian Anderson, and Dane Hipkin
- 2 **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** – Cllr C Shepherd declared an interest in agenda item 8 -DVCA work, due to being a Trustee for the DVCA.
- 3 **Public participation** - None present.
- 4 **Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 12th February 2024**
 - 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 C Shepherd said after the grant approved at the previous F&A Committee for the Choral Society there is a small amount of money remaining in the minor grants budget. Cllr M Shepherd advised he would discuss the minor grant budget under agenda item 5(b).
- 5 **Current Financial Position**
 - a) IAC monthly report
Cllr M Sheperd reported he had completed his IAC checks for February 2024 and confirmed the bank reconciliations for 1st April 2023 to 29th February 2024 are in order and all reports are numerically consistent. All payments were made in line with the financial regulations.
 - b) Whole council budgets
Cllr M Shepherd advised all the reports for the whole councils' budgets had been placed on SharePoint and asked the RFO if she agreed that the budgets are on target to the end of the financial year as projected. The RFO agreed the budgets were on target.
Cllr M Shepherd stated there is £50.00 remaining in the minor grants' budgets and asked committee if they had any ideas who would benefit from a donation. NARS was suggested as a recipient, councillors discussed the suggestion. **It was resolved to approve a grant of £50.00 be given to NARS.** Cllr M Shepherd asked the BM to provide the necessary details to the RFO.
 - c) Aged debtors
Cllr M Shepherd informed the meeting that the invoices for the two aged debtors shown on the report had only been issued 7th March 2024, therefore they have not passed their due payment date.

d) Reserves

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

6 IT Update

Cllr M Shepherd advised work on the new website is continuing.

The new email addresses (@dersingham-pc.gov.uk) for Councillors and staff have now been set up as aliases to current mailboxes. The Government have made available a grant of £100.00 towards the implementation of new websites and emails, the PC have already received their grant. At some point we will need to switch uses to the new email addresses but that does not need to be done immediately or all at the same time.

Cllr M Shepherd said, due to the extensive work ongoing with the new website, he has been unable to test the ABM standalone PC to check if it could be used as a back-up if the office laptops fail.

7 BACS Payment Procedure

Cllr M Shepherd stated the current procedure for making BACS payments is:

One Cllr Sets the payments up and a second Cllr then checks the details and releases the payments. However, the original procedure involved the Clerk setting the payments up and a Cllr releasing them.

Cllr M Shepherd proposed, now the RFO is an authorised signatory on the bank account, the RFO sets up the payments and a Cllr then checks and releases them. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

8 DVCA Work

Cllr M Shepherd said a request had been made by the DVCA trustees to have an electrician put in a new USB enabled power socket in the Hub. A “feed” will be taken adjacent a point in Store 3 and run surface mounted to a point where it will be taken through the wall to the new socket positioned under the wall mounted tile display. Cllr M Shepherd stated that as part of the terms of the lease between DVCA and the PC, DVCA must seek agreement from the PC for any work they wish to undertake to service media, which includes the fixed electrical cabling. Committee discussed the request. **It was resolved to approve the request made by the DVCA with the following conditions: The work is to be carried out by a qualified electrician, the work be tested under the current regulations, there is to be no surface mounted cable runs or pattress boxes in The Hub and any damage to walls is to be made good.**

9 Disposal of Redundant Office Equipment

The BM explained the list of items for the electrical PAT testing had been placed on SharePoint. It is a dual-purpose list one to show the items for testing the other to highlight those items to be potentially disposed of.

Item 8 Office Shredder – The current shredder is in extremely poor condition, a new one has been ordered as a replacement. After discussion it was agreed the old shredder be disposed of and Cllr C Shepherd agreed to take it to the recycling centre.

Item 25 Old Laptop – The BM explained this laptop has not been used for several years. It was agreed to dispose of the item. Cllr M Shepherd queried how the laptop would be disposed of. The BM assured him the hard drive would be removed and stored in the safe in the PC office.

Item 26 Floor mounted fan in storage – A new fan has been ordered to replace the old fan which is in poor condition. It was agreed to dispose of the fan. Cllr C Shepherd agreed to take the fan to the recycling centre.

The BM said she would update and remove the items for disposal on the PAT testing list and contact the contractor to arrange a day for the testing to be carried out.

10 Business Manager Updates

(a) Risk Register – Progress Update

The BM advised the draft version of the Risk Register had been placed on SharePoint. There are a few items that need clarification/confirmation such as: New Health & Safety Policy, IT User Policy, a section in the Contract of Employment regarding overpayments and recouperation of money and the VAT reclaiming/charging be monitored in the IAC quarterly report. Cllr M Shepherd advised he had been unable to read through the Risk Register as he has been working on the new PC Website but would do so as soon as possible.

(b) Contract Register – Progress Update

The BM advised she had been collating information with assistance from the ABM for the contract register and said the new register will detail the budget code and heading for the contract concerned to enable the Internal Auditors (IA) to cross reference spend against agreed contracts. Cllr M Shepherd asked if the information would be stored electronically and shared with the RFO. The BM said it would be stored electronically and placed on SharePoint for both Councillor and staff access and a paper copy will be stored in the safe in the PC office. Cllr C Shepherd asked when the Internal Audit was due. The BM advised it is scheduled for 29th April 2024.

11 Correspondence

11.1 BT Increase in Pricing

Cllr M Shepherd said that as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25 F&A committee had allowed for a rise in inflation, however the new price increase from BT would exceed the budget set. Councillors discussed various options as to how the PC could obtain a new internet and telephone contract. It was agreed for Cllr M Shepherd to look into options available.

12 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Internal Audit

Authorised bank signatories' review.

13 Date of next meeting – Monday 15th April 2024, 7pm in the Loft

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.00pm

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.

14 Leases Update

a) Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd advised we are waiting for the final version of the Head Lease.

b) Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Lease

Cllr C Shepherd advise, that as the solicitor dealing with the lease had not been in contact, she had spoken her manager. The solicitor has since responded and advised she has had no reply from the Social Clubs solicitor.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.05pm

Action Points

Business Manager

- 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 supply the RFO with information regarding the agreed donation to NARS.
- To dispose of the old laptop
- Update/remove items for disposal from the PAT testing list.

Cllr C Shepherd

- To contact a specialist roofing/safety company for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.
- To dispose of the office shredder and fan.

Cllr M Shepherd

- To test the ABM standalone PC to establish if it can be used as backup by staff.
- Investigate alternative broadband supplier