

Market Drayton Town Council**Minutes of a Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting
held at The Town Hall, Frogmore Road on Thursday 15 December 2022 at 7.42pm.**

PRESENT: Councillors: R. Aldcroft, Mrs. J. Beckett, T. Beckett (Chairman), M. Erwin, R. Hughes, W. Love, T. Manton, I. Nellins, and M. Whittle.

ABSENT: Councillors: B. Chapman and A. Sanderson.

In Attendance: 2 members of the public were present and 3 members of the public listening to the meeting via Teams.

Clerks: Sue Thomas, Town Clerk and Kate Harvey, Assistant Clerk.

1.FG APOLOGIES

Members **NOTED** the following apology:

Councillor B. Chapman – Sickness.

2.FG DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3.FG PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public had expressed a wish to speak at the meeting.

4.FG MINUTES

Councillor Manton proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with 1 abstention:

To approve the minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 13 October 2022.

5.FG GREENFIELDS SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Documents, members questions and answers from the Greenfields Sports Association Chairman were circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Manton proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

To suspend Standing Orders to enable members to ask further questions to the Chairman of Greenfields Sports Association, Mr Walwyn.

The Chairman of Greenfields Sports Association explained that electrical work needs to be undertaken on site and requested financial support from the Town Council to cover the costs of the work.

He explained that the proposed works will be done in two phases.

Phase 1 – urgent work to be completed within two months at a cost of £15K . This will be testing all trips in the distribution boxes to identify any immediate risk areas, install five-time delay units in the bunker so immediate trip at source should there be any issues and identify and replace priority distribution boards.

Phase 2 – work to be completed within three months at a cost of approximately £66K but more quotes are to be obtained. This will cover supplying new mains supply switches, distribution boards, football club floodlights switch gear and training lights.

Members expressed concern regarding the delay in the relocation of the sports facility which has resulted in investment being needed to maintain and upkeep the current facilities. Shropshire Council has said the relocation delay is due to a funding shortfall.

To raise additional income, it was suggested subs should be increased and surrounding parishes should be approached for financial support; the Chairman of Greenfields agreed to look at the post codes of club members to identify if enough members live outside of the town to support contacting Parish Councils.

A conversation took place regarding the invoices and payment of VAT. The Clerk said that Town Council cannot pay directly for the work to be done as the work is being done on behalf of Greenfields Sport Association on assets that do not belong to the Town Council. The grant for the work will be paid to the association; it was advised they should look into becoming VAT registered so the VAT can be claimed back and to look at the way the organisation is set up as a different model may provide more flexibility regarding VAT and applying for external funding.

The Chairman of Greenfields said he would look into registering the Association as a VAT company.

After an in-depth conversation:

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Whittle seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

To fund Phase 1 of Greenfields Sports Association Ltd electrical work at a cost of £15K to come out of General Reserves.

Councillor Nellins said asking for over £81K is a big ask as the Town Council only have a limited amount of funds. He said he has emailed two portfolio holders at Shropshire Council outlining the need for funding for the upkeep of this well used facility and that there is a pot of money in CIL Local that could be used to help fund the upgrades; he will keep all members informed of any responses.

The Clerk said there will be approximately £300K in Town Council's general reserves at the end of this financial year; guidance is to keep up to six months of precept in reserves and she recommended no going below £250k in general reserves.

After an in-depth conversation:

Councillor Erwin proposed, Councillor Whittle seconded and it was **RESOLVED:**

To ringfence £50K from General Reserves for Phase 2 of Greenfields Association Ltd electrical work. Money will be allocated once three quotes have been received for the necessary works and allocated when needed.

£15K to be added to Greenfields Association Ltd budget for the financial year 2023/24. To be allocated upon receipt of invoices.

Mr Walwyn thanked members for their support.

Two members of the public left the Chamber.

The meeting went back into Standing Orders.

6.FG LARGE GRANTS POLICY

The new amended policy was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Clerk said the Chairs discussed the policy at the budget meeting where it was suggested the large grants policy be amended to reflect a reduction from £5K to £2K for the maximum grant request and that no grants will be awarded annually towards the same project/event.

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with 1 abstention:

To approve and adopt the amended Large Grants Policy.

7.FG GRANTS

i. Small Grants

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman said there is £500 remaining in budget.

Market Drayton Senior Citizens Forum

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor Nellins seconded and it was **RESOLVED**:

To award Market Drayton Senior Citizens Forum, a grant of £250 to help towards the cost of the meeting room, administration and contributing towards the members Christmas lunch.

Market Drayton Methodist Minibus

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor Nellins seconded and it was **RESOLVED**:

To award Market Drayton Methodist Minibus, a grant of £250 to help towards the running costs of the bus within the community.

ii. Large Grants

It was **NOTED** that the large grant scheme is closed as the budget has been allocated.

8.FG COUNCILLOR-OFFICER PROTOCOL

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Clerk said the protocol has been produced by SaLC and it is recommended Council consider adopt it.

Councillor Whittle proposed, Councillor Manton seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with 1 vote against:

To agree and approve the Councillor-Officer Protocol.

9.FG FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE BUDGET 2023-24.

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairman said the budget has been slightly reduced for next year due to £3,000 being moved from Large grants to Community & Governance budget for Citizens Advice. He asked if any member had any questions they would like to make.

No questions were asked.

Councillor Manton proposed, Councillor Aldcroft seconded, and it was **RESOLVED:**

To recommend the following Finance and General Purposes Committee budget for 2023/24 to the next Full Council Meeting in January 2023.

| Cost Centre | Description | Proposed Budget 2023/24 |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 201 | Administration | 147,600 |
| 202 | Admin and Outside Staff Accommodation | 35,900 |
| 203 | Civic Activities | 28,625 |
| 206 | Miscellaneous (PWLb) | 5,000 |
| 207 | Grants | 14,000 |
| Total £ | | 231,125 |

10.FG BUDGET 2023-24

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Clerk circulated a revised budget for 2023-24. She explained that the budget has been updated as Shropshire Council has sent through the precept amount for 2023/24; the precept figure is £530,657.

With the additional of the additional budget allocation discussed at Community and Governance and earlier in the meeting there will be budget shortfall of approximately £25,000.

Members **NOTED** the amended budget for 2023-24.

Members to approve the amended budget at the next Council Committee in January 2023.

Councillor Hughes suggested a 0% increase on precept for 2023-24 and the shortfall to come from General Reserves.

11.FG FINANCIAL REPORT

Documents were circulated prior to the meeting.

There were no comments or questions made by members.

Councillor Hughes proposed, Councillor Manton seconded, and it was **RESOLVED:**

To agree the income and expenditure report 1 October 2022 – 30 November 2022.

12.FG UPDATES AND INFORMATION

The following update was **NOTED**:

Town Hall

The relocating and installing a new data cabinet to house all cables and equipment required for the data network and backup system at the Town Hall work has been carried out.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 p.m.

Signed:

Date: