



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee held on Tuesday 15th October 2024 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

Present: Councillors Jo Davis; Andrew Larcombe (Chair); John Ogilvie-Davidson; Kathy Thomas.

In attendance: Tanya West – Parish Clerk, Joy Luxford - RFO

The meeting started at 19:00

Public Session

There was 1 member of the public present representing Somer Valley FM at the meeting. They presented their community grant application for digital radio (agenda item F&G035 below). The benefit to Peasedown St John residents was discussed and the opportunities for local residents to get involved as well as the advertising of events for locals (the radio station is committed to 140 hours of local community per week).

F&G031 – 15/10/2024 Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest

The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). The Chair of the Committee formally welcomed the new RFO as it was her first committee meeting. For transparency purposes, Cllr Davis volunteers at Somer Valley FM but has no pecuniary interests. No further interests to those already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer were declared.

F&G032 – 15/10/2024 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Simon Kidd and The Chair of Full Council were absent with apology. Cllr. Daniel Walker declined the meeting but did not formally send apologies. The Vice-Chair of Full Council was absent without apology, however, as not summonsed to the meeting, and being ex-officio, this was not necessarily a requirement. The apologies were duly noted (but not accepted).

F&G033 – 15/10/2024 Minutes & Actions

- i. The minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on 8th August 2024 had been circulated in advance of the meeting; it was resolved that they be accepted as a true and correct record of that meeting, and it was agreed that these would be signed by the Chair accordingly.
- ii. Councillors received a verbal update on the actions raised from the last meeting as follows:
 - a. **Action: The User Acceptance Agreement is being worked on with Cllr. Kidd and the Clerk – this will continue to be tracked through the action tracker.**
 - b. Insurance has been arranged subject to approval received at Full Council (C063 – 24/09/2024)
 - c. **Action: The Financial regulations were adopted at the last F&G meeting (F&G023 – 08/08/2024) but signatures remain outstanding.**
 - d. **Action: The clerk will confirm by 18/10/2024 to the Air Ambulance the outcome of their grant application (F&G022 – 08/08/2024).**
 - e. **Action: A quote totalling £1,100 has been obtained to prepare a video for the Annual Village Meeting (in line with the process adopted last year and discussed at the last meeting F&G022 – 08/08/2024). The committee discussed the benefits and drawbacks of this approach and resolved to recommend to Full Council that we engage with Helena Midgley Films to produce a video for the Annual Village Meeting with budget taken from Infrequent Operational Expenditure on the proviso that we promote the**

video including on the newsletter and updated website (this to be pursued as a separate project).

- f. The Cyber insurance quotation is included on this agenda (F&G036)
- g. External audit is included on this agenda (F&G039)
- h. Vehicle insurance has been arranged.
- i. The Business Interruption Claim has been chased by the Clerk and we await a response.

F&G034 – 15/10/2024 Items for Urgent Report

There were no items for urgent report.

F&G035 – 15/10/2024 Community Grants

The Committee received an update on the issuing of Community Grants for 2024/25 and noted that the total amount available for the second phase was £3,326.18. The committee considered five applications for the second phase of Community Grants for 2024/25 and received an update on open access youth sessions at The Hive and considered making a recommendation for funding in 2025.

The deadline for the second phase of Community Grants was 7th October 2024, and five applications were received by that date. Councillors considered the applications totalling £4,600 from:

- Peasedown Miners Welfare FC – The committee resolved to fund first-aid and training kits to the value of £250 for named and invoiced items.
- Craft and Lunch Club – The committee resolved to fund craft items to the value of £150 but as they have no bank account, the council should purchase on their behalf if they provided a list of items.
- 1st Peasedown St John Scout Group (x 2 applications) – The committee resolved to fund the road closure signs to the value of £250 but did not support the application for training.
- Somer Valley FM – The committee resolved to pledge £2,676.18 towards the DAB licence subject to the project proceeding and confirmation that full funding is in place.

The member of public left at 20:04.

The committee considered a proposal from The Hive for on-going support for youth services of £5,000 minimum per year. It was agreed that this proposal was outside the remit of this committee, and therefore it would be put forward to Full Council to consider revenue support for the youth worker. It was noted that the support they provide to young people is admirable within the village community. However, there is an aspiration within the Committee for the Hive to become financially sustainable without grant funds. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to visit the youth service to discover more (Cllrs. Davis, Larcombe and Ogilvie-Davidson agreed to visit ahead of the next Full Council meeting), with the aim to consider making a proposal to Full Council of the possibility of adding a budget line into the FY25/26 accounts.

Actions:

1. **Cllrs. Davis, Larcombe and Ogilvie-Davidson to visit the Hive youth service ahead of the next Full Council meeting.**
2. **The Clerk to confirm to the Hive that Cllrs will attend a session.**
3. **The Clerk to create Parish Council names badges for Cllrs. Davis and Ogilvie-Davidson ahead of the visit.**

F&G036 – 15/10/2024 Insurance Cover Policy Renewal & Cyber Cover

Councillors received an update on the insurance cover that was renewed prior to the renewal date of 1st October 2024. The cyber insurance cover, as supplied by the broker, had been circulated as pre-reading.

F&G reviewed and considered the attached information and discussed further. Given the low-medium risk identified by the insurance provided, and that the insurer was also uncertain whether the upgraded policy would pay out based on our current systems, the Clerk and RFO recommend no further action. The committee agreed this approach.

F&G037 – 15/10/2024 Utility Contracts Renewal

The Committee received an update on the renewal of the utility contracts for the different Parish Council managed sites. The committee was asked to consider the small difference, of £33.86, due to the delay on transfer between Yu Energy and Octopus as part of the utility costs of the year, and with value for money in mind, determined that the RFO should not seek to reclaim the difference from Octopus.

F&G038 – 15/10/2024 Banking Arrangements

Councillors received an update on banking arrangements, signatories and bank mandates, banking charges and fees. It was noted that Cllr Kidd account access remains locked.

Action: The Clerk to contact Unity Trust Bank and Natwest to seek to Cllr Kidd bank account access and accelerate access for the RFO.

F&G039 – 15/10/2024 Internal & External Audits

The Committee received an update on the plans for the interim Internal Audit for the financial year ending 2024/25 scheduled for 8th November 2024. The committee resolved to approve the invoice totalling £756.00 from BDO LLP for the External Audit work.

F&G040 – 15/10/2024 Review of Current Finances 2024/25

The Committee consider the reports on financial spend against budget for the 2024/25 financial year covering both operational and capital projects budgets [in full and committee allocation formats] including:

- Review of 'Contracted Amenities Works' and Staff Salaries budgets.
- Review of 'Infrequent Operational Expenditure.'
- Review of Persimmon land transfer income and expenditure. Despite chasing by the Clerk and Cllr Thomas the land transfer has not been completed. The Clerk has notified Persimmon that maintenance work will need to be scheduled and paid for.
- Review of the Balance Sheet for bank account balances, credit card and petty cash.
- Review of the Reserves, Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) and Committed Expenditure. Cllr Thomas provided an update that the EMR Wildlife Pond is unlikely to be spent in this FY so will need to be rolled over to FY25/26.
- Update on VAT claim. Note that this will be completed before end of October 2024 in line with reporting deadlines.
- The quarterly bank reconciliations will be reviewed on 17th October 2024. There was a small delay this quarter due to Cllr holidays.

Actions:

1. **The Committee requested that overall percentage totals be included for all reports going forward. RFO to action.**
2. **The Clerk to investigate the status of the School Road Safety Officer from B&NES Council and our rights and responsibilities.**
3. **The Committee agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&G could meet with the RFO to propose budgets for the budget lines under the remit of the F&G Committee.**
4. **The Committee discussed and agreed that spending on hedges under the remit of the A&F Committee should be segregated by location for visibility but given the cyclical nature of maintenance work that it would be permissible to overspend on one area at the expense of another as long as the total was within budget thresholds.**
5. **The spreadsheet listing the EMR in relation to the Beacon Hall AV Equipment is to be updated as per the decision at the last Full Council meeting (C062 – 24/09/2024).**
6. **The Committee agreed to rename the EMR "Accessible plots" to "Braysdown allotments improvements".**

F&G041 – 15/10/2024 Review of Debtors and Creditors

The report on the financial debtors and creditors was tabled and reviewed at the meeting.

Action: The RFO to discuss the WorkNest invoice and seek to get a resolution that either they resolve our query or write off the outstanding credit balance.

F&G042 – 15/10/2024 Community Infrastructure Levy and External Funding

The F&G Committee considered the update on external income provided in the pre-reading. It was noted that a payment of £7,691.05 had been received from WECA for the Corticyte insulation project at Beacon Hall.

F&G043 – 15/10/2024 Budget Planning 2024/25

The F&G Committee considered the update provided in the pre-reading on the timelines and processes for budget planning for the 2025/26 financial year and recommended that the Chair and Vice-Chair of F&G and the RFO go through the F&G budgets on behalf of the committee.

F&G044 – 15/10/2024 F&G Committee Related Policies & Procedures

The Committee reviewed the list of polices that have been allocated to the Finance & Governance Committee as detailed on the Strategic Documentation Register, circulated in pre-reading, and agreed plans to review those policies throughout the council year.

Action:

The Committee agreed that the Clerk & RFO split the policy documents between them to review and to check for any legislation changes. Commencing in November, two documents per month will be uploaded to Teams with suggested amendments and specifying a deadline date for councillors to respond/submit any feedback. Amended documents will be brought to future meetings for sign off prior to ratification at Full Council. Cllrs Larcombe and Thomas to assist with this process.

F&G045 – 15/10/2024 Date and Time of Next Meeting & Future Agenda Items

The next meeting of the next Finance & Governance Committee is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall.

Meeting closed at 21:23

Signed..... Date.....

