

Minutes_Finance_300323V1 _____	2
Annex A _____	6

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting

held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council,

1900hrs on Thursday 30th March 2023.

Present: Councillors James Hunt (Chair), David Somers (Deputy Mayor), Colin Hunt, Richard Nichols, and Christopher Edwardson.

Absent: None.

In attendance: Town Clerk, Ian Lyons.

Apologies: Councillors Simon Budd (Mayor) and Caroline Johnson.

Public: No members of the public attended the meeting.

Notes: The meeting began at 1900hrs. All resolutions are passed with a majority vote, by a show of hands, unless otherwise stated.

FIN_2022.129 Election.

Minutes: Cllr James Hunt (Chair) was able to attend the meeting and this item was no longer necessary.

FIN_2022.130 Welcome and Introductions.

Minutes: Cllr James Hunt (Chair) welcomed everyone present at the meeting and explained the emergency procedures.

FIN_2022.131 Declaration of Interest – Localism Act 2011.

Minutes: Cllr James Hunt (Chair) reminded members of the requirement to declare an interest. No interests were declared.

FIN_2022.132 Public Participation.

Minutes: No members of the public attended the meeting.

COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

FIN_2022.133 Minutes.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, supported by Cllr Richard Nichols, and resolved that:

Resolved: The *Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting, held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council, 1900hrs on the 23rd of February 2023*, copies having been circulated, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

Minutes: The minutes were signed at the meeting by Cllr James Hunt (Chair).

FIN_2022.134 Outstanding items from the previous minutes.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk delivered a summary of the work undertaken as a result of the resolutions and action points from the previous meetings. Details can be found in the *Town Clerk's Report* at Annex A.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

FIN_2022.135 2nd Mangotsfield Brownies.

Minutes: To begin with, at the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Town Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A. After this, members reviewed the application and confirmed the location of the organisation. Next, Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) requested further information about s.137, and a summary was provided by the Town Clerk. Finally,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), and resolved that:

Resolved: The Finance Committee refers this grant application to the Full Council.

FIN_2022.136 Mangotsfield FC.

Minutes: To begin with, at the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Town Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A. After this, members reviewed the application and asked the Town Clerk to clarify company details and accounts with the applicants prior to consideration at Full Council, including match funding approval. Councillors recommended attendance from a representative at the meeting. After this,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), and resolved that:

Resolved: The Finance Committee refers this grant application to the Full Council.

Action: Town Clerk is to write to the applicants for clarifications with a recommendation of attendance at the decision meeting.

FINANCE

FIN_2022.137 Bank Reconciliations.

Minutes: The committee read the circulated documents and they were signed by the Chair.

FIN_2022.138 Monthly Payments & Investments.

Minutes: Members examined the schedule, and Cllr James Hunt (Chair) invited questions from members. To begin with, Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) questioned the purchase of a laptop. In reply, Cllr James Hunt (Chair) explained that the Council had resolved to provide IT equipment to Councillors on request, on a case-by-case basis. Likewise, the Town Clerk explained that on the 23rd of January 2023, the Finance Committee approved the *EGTC IT Procurement Strategy*, which detailed the arrangements. Finally,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Richard Nichols, supported by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, and resolved that:

Resolved: The monthly payments list, copies having been circulated, be approved, and signed by the Chair.

Minutes: The Chair signed the payments list.

FIN_2022.139 Budget Monitoring.

Minutes: Members reviewed the circulated documents and Cllr James Hunt (Chair) invited questions from members. The committee had no questions.

FIN_2022.140 Banking Arrangements.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk delivered an update on the Council's banking arrangements, details can be found in the *Town Clerk's Report* at Annex A. Cllr Richard Nichols thanked the Town Clerk for a job well done.

FIN_2022.141 Financial Planning.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk explained that this was delegated Function 2 in the terms of reference for the Finance Committee, and represented an opportunity for forward planning. After this, Cllr Colin Hunt suggested that it may be necessary to budget for suitable vehicles in the next budget, particularly if further devolution of services were to occur. However, it was agreed that no further action should be taken at this time.

PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS

FIN_2022.142 Procurement – CB Radios.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk provided the background, summary, and advice, which can be found in the *Town Clerk's Report* at Annex A.

After that, Cllr Richard Nichols questioned if the low cost of the items would be reflected in the quality. In reply, the Town Clerk explained that a consultation had taken place with the security contractor for the Coronation Event. It was reported that the items in question had proven to be robust, and would be compatible with their own equipment. Finally,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr Richard Nichols, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Finance Committee delegates authority to the Town Clerk to purchase CB Radios at the Town Clerk's discretion, example copies having been circulated.

FIN_2022.143 Contract - Website.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr James Hunt (Chair), the Town Clerk provided the background, summary, and advice, which can be found in the *Town Clerk's Report* at Annex A. This included a short presentation on the projector, demonstrating how a Community Directory might work.

After that, Cllr Richard Nichols questioned if this was necessary at the present time, particularly when Human Resources were already stretched. In reply, Cllr James Hunt (Chair) shared the view that the work could be commissioned now and take place later in the year when time allowed. Likewise, the Town Clerk agreed that the workload for staff was high but some of the tasks included in the project were outsourced to Nebula IT, and it would take time for the build to be completed. Finally,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Finance Committee delegates authority to the Town Clerk to commission a website upgrade project, example copies having been circulated.

FIN_2022.144 Dates and Timings.

Minutes: Cllr James Hunt (Chair) announced that the next meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled to take place:

Thursday 27th April 2023 at 1900hrs in the Emersons Green Town Council Chamber.

Cllr James Hunt (Chair) concluded the formal business of the meeting at 1941hrs and announced that an informal 'round-table' discussion would take place afterward.



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER
TO: FINANCE COMMITTEE
REPORT DATE: 30th March 2023

Contact Details: Ian Lyons
Tel. No: 0117 3026989
Email: clerk@emersonsgreen-tc.gov.uk

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with official advice and recommendations from the Town Councils proper officer for the following meeting:

**Finance Committee, The Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council,
Thursday 30th March 2023 commencing at 1900hrs.**

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.134

Outstanding Items.

To report that:

- All of the grants deferred to Full Council were considered and all of the successful applications are listed for approval of payment.
- The Council has purchased Insurance. The premium has increased slightly. This is mainly due to additional cover for the increase in the estimated population from 10,000 to 17,500. Also, the Council's policy now includes cover for Terrorism.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.135 2nd Mangotsfield Brownies.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Local Government Act 1972, s.137.
- Finance Committee Terms of Reference, function 7.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

- Decide on the merits of the grant application.
- *If necessary:*
- Resolve that: “The Finance Committee refers this grant application to the Full Council”.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Only the Full Council can approve a Section 137 grant application.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This application will be among the first grants to be presented in the new financial year. The Council has budgeted £40,000 for grants in 2023/24, with £20,000 allocated for s.137 grants. Therefore, the Council easily has the funds to approve this application if it chooses to do so.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

A large proportion of the footprint of this activity will be mitigated by sharing transport to take part in the event. Furthermore, providing young people with the opportunity to experience the outdoors could be a valuable learning experience which fosters an appreciation of the environment. This is a subject matter that Councillors could ask the event organiser to consider including.

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.136 Mangotsfield FC.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19.
- Finance Committee Terms of Reference, function 7.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

- Decide on the merits of the grant application.
 - *If necessary:*
- Resolve that: “The Finance Committee refers this grant application to the Full Council”.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Only the Full Council can approve a grant application over £5,000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This application will be among the first grants to be presented in the new financial year. The Council has budgeted £40,000 for grants in 2023/24, with £20,000 allocated for s.137 grants. Therefore, the Council easily has the funds to approve this application if it chooses to do so.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

[LED floodlights will have a much lower footprint than traditional lighting systems.]¹

FINANCE

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.140 Banking Arrangements.

To report that:

- The Council has received a total of £300 from successful banking complaints, which have taken up a great deal of the Town Clerk's time. Firstly, an administration error which resulted in a Councillor being removed from the mandate. More recently, a similar error resulted in temporary restrictions on the Council account. Thankfully, these matters have now been fully resolved.
- Since the Town Clerk upgraded the Council savings account, we have received an additional £2,516.14 in interest. Previously, this was close to zero.
- Likewise, since the Town Clerk implemented the Treasury Deposit Scheme, we have already received £123.15 with a further £3,343.01 maturing soon.
- In sum, it is expected that the budget target of £5,200 will easily be exceeded.

PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.142 Procurement – CB Radios

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Local Government Act 1972, s.111.

RECOMMENDATION

- Resolve that: "The Finance Committee delegates authority to the Town Clerk to purchase CB Radios at the Town Clerk's discretion, example copies having been circulated."

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To provide emergency communications options.
- To provide radios for staff and volunteers at organised events, and other activities, such as the Coronation.

¹ This advice was provided at the meeting but omitted in error on the original circulated document.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has agreed on a budget of £3,000 for office equipment in 2023/24, an increase of £2,595 on the previous year. Although, a large proportion of this budget is earmarked to accommodate any new members of staff.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

CB Radios are low-powered devices that have a small environmental footprint.

AGENDA ITEM: FIN_2022.143 Contract – Website

In summary, the project will provide the Council with a Community Directory, similar to the example. This will allow local community groups to advertise regular activities and events that are open to the public. For example, a young person looking for a new hobby would have a wide variety of local clubs to choose from and be able to find their contact details easily. Likewise, an older person experiencing loneliness would be able to choose from several sociable activities to attend. The Council website would act as a community hub.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Local Government Act 1972, s.142.
- Local Government Act 1972, s.111.

RECOMMENDATION

- Resolve that: “The Finance Committee delegates authority to the Town Clerk to commission a website upgrade project, example copies having been circulated.”

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To meet strategic aim E8 of “an upgraded and more informative and interactive website”.
- To meet the overall strategic aim of continuous service improvement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has agreed on a budget of £3,600 for the website in 2023/24. Approximately £2,200 of this budget will be used for routine maintenance with Nebula IT. This leaves £1,400 for ad-hoc work and a small project like this.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

Our website and communications strategy allows the public to communicate with the Council effectively and efficiently. This may also reduce the need for unnecessary journeys.