

Minutes of the Ackworth Parish Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee, held on Monday 20 February 2023 at 8pm at the Parish Council Community Centre, Bell Lane.

Present: Cllr: S Balfour, in the chair
Cllrs: J Bell, T Hames, S Parker and M Roberts

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To receive and approve reasons for absence

1.1. Apologies were received from Cllr M Galvin for reasons recorded in the attendance book

2. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

2.1. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda
Cllrs J Bell and T Hames re-stated their interest relating to item 12, to which previous dispensations had been approved for the duration of the project.

Cllr J Bell for agenda item 7 as his family member has submitted the application.

2.2. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any)
None received

2.3. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate
None received

3. To receive and note the minutes for the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 28 November 2022

3.1 The minutes were noted. Updates on outstanding actions was received.

Resolved: 1) That the Hate Crime reporting matter is closed for now and can be revisited should further updates become available from WMDC. 2) That the handover of the community centre on the Strata housing development is chased up and a committed handover timeline agreed, ideally before May 2023. 3) Ackworth Parish Council should insist that a snagging inspection is held, and any issues rectified before the building is officially handed over to Ackworth Parish Council. 4) That Cllr John Bell's offer, with his construction industry background, is to help the office achieve a timely handover.

4. To receive a report on Freedom of Information requests

4.1 The administrator gave an overview of the impact on the office's ability to carry-out the parish council's functions and responsibilities due to the volume of FOI requests both past and current, which were causing significant delays, additional hours having to be worked and frustration. To date, there are 11 outstanding requests, 4 of which were nearly completed, and 2 that are still requiring attention.

Discussions took place. Proposals were tabled and seconded which saw 4 for, 1 abstention.

Resolved: 1) That the FOI's near to completion will be sent to the enquirer.

2) That as of today's date 20th February 2023, the recently received emails from resident(s) will not be actioned on the grounds of excessiveness.

3) That the FOI of November 2022 will be forwarded to the Chair of the council and then to the FOI committee for a response. Once that response is sent to the enquirer, no further follow up questions will be actioned on the grounds of excessiveness.

4) That the Information Commissioner Office statement re excessive FOI's is used when contacting the enquirers.

5. To receive a quotation for lift servicing at the Community Centre on Bell Lane for 2023/24

The meeting was informed there had been no capacity to tender for this and the short term solution was to request a one off service quoted at £200 +vat. Discussions took place.

Resolved: That the reason and quotation is recommended to full council for approval.

- 6. To receive a quotation for summer hanging baskets throughout the village for 2023.**
Quotation circulated prior.
Resolved: That the quotation for £3,276.00 inc vat is recommended for approval.
- 7. To receive a request from Ackworth Community Library for a donation towards the hire cost of a room in the Parish Council Community Centre, for their 10-year birthday celebrations.**
It was proposed, seconded and unanimously voted upon that the hire charge is fully waived.
Resolved: That it is recommended to full council that the Library can use the community facilities for their 10year celebrations free of charge.
- 8. To receive a report from the Interim Clerk regarding Internal Checks carried out by Cllr Hames**
As per the recommendation from an internal auditor report, the 'internal controls check' was carried out by Cllr T Hames. This included randomly selected invoices for checking against works approved and payments made. Copies were circulated at the meeting, Cllr Hames found no irregularities to report.
Resolved: That appreciation is extended to the office staff and Cllr Hames for accommodating this task.
- 9. To confirm the fidelity guarantee reflects the maximum amount that is held in the Council's bank account at any point during the year.**
The meeting was informed that the insurance policy had been checked and the Fidelity Insurance amount was in order.
- 10. To review the existing insurance policy to ensure it is still adequate.**
The policy had been circulated in the meeting pack. Discussions took place around the amounts stated being the rebuild costs of the facilities, that no more than £1,000 in cash is physically carried when banking monies received, as stated in the insurance policy and that the policy was in a Long Term Agreement until 2025.
Resolved: That the policy is recommended to full council as being reviewed and continues to be fit for purpose.
- 11. To review and approve the Risk Management Assessment for year ending 31 March 2023**
The document had been circulated in the meeting pack. The interim clerk shared her suggested amendments. Discussions took place.
Resolved: That the document with the suggested amendments (in red) is recommended to full council to be approved and continues to be fit for purpose.
- 12. To discuss the allocation of CIL funding for the previously agreed projects**
Cllr Roberts had included in the meeting pack, his proposal for a) Exercise Equipment along Dando Way, b) New building project for Low Ackworth Community Association and c) Making the new Quarries Community Centre operational, fitted and furnished out ready to be used by the community in writing. Detailed discussions took place. Cllr Hames submitted an amendment to reflect that Low Ackworth Community Centre should receive a larger proportion of the available CIL money.
Voting took place which saw 1 for 3 against – amendment fell.
Voting took place on the original motion which saw a unanimous vote in favour.
Resolved: To recommend to full council that the available CIL money of £101,473.28 is divided equally between the 3 projects.
- 13. To discuss the allocation of Reserves**
Cllr Balfour had included in the meeting pack her proposal for the allocation of available reserves, effectively a 'Statement of Intent.'
The Interim Clerk informed that the final figure of available reserves was unavailable, and that the meeting should be mindful the amount could substantially reduce once the reconciliation was completed. Further discussions took place which saw amendments to the statement of intent.

Resolved: 1) That the Statement of Intent at 2.1 includes the words 'and battery storage' at the end of the sentence. That 2.2 includes the wording 'hybrid/working from home' at the end of the second sentence.

2) That the amended 'Statement of Intent is recommended to full council to be approved as a working document for future reference.

- 14. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETING ACT 1960) THAT THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

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