



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, L Delves, E O’Driscoll, L Stark, and P Symonds

Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)

In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk

There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

FP23/01#01 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor K Fowler

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

Absent – Councillor S Cole

FP23/01#02 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

FP23/01#03 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/01#04 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

FP23/01#05 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Utting

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

Unanimous

RESOLVED – that agenda item FP23/01#12 - ‘Commercial in Confidence’ be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

FP23/01#06 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 15th November 2022.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 15th November 2022 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/01#07 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- St Mary's Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – no further progress
- Market House Lease – final draft circulated, awaiting signing. Insurance company confirmed security of cover during this interim period
- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – no further progress, awaiting decision regarding VAT as there will be implications for the Council
- Transfer of Bank account – no further progress
- Insurance complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service – no further progress

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/01#08 Town Clerk's Report

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- CCTV – confirmation of the order for the purchase of two new cameras for inclusion into the HC network had been received. It is anticipated a Spring installation date could be possible
- Homs Road car park – Welsh Water have obtained a number of legal Orders to enable them to carry out works to their network. A compound has been set up within the car park for which the Council have received financial consideration. It is likely to be in situ for approx. 8 weeks subject to the rate of progress
- Energy Audit/Heat Decarbonisation Plans – HC has secured funding towards the new grant programme for public buildings. It is anticipated any recommendations as a result of the audit will make council buildings more energy efficient
- Smaller Authority Audit Appointments – a 5 year contract for external audit services has been awarded to PKF Littlejohn
- Wye St toilets – electrical works to install a light photocell to operate the outside lights and also the fitting of motions sensors have been completed in efforts to reduce energy consumption
- Referendum principles – the government recently announced there are no plans to introduce capping measures to local councils for 2023/24
- Annual Parish Meeting – Lynda Wilcox from HALC has accepted the invitation to speak at the March meeting about local democracy and standing in the May elections. Representatives from the grant recipients will also be invited to talk about their projects

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/01#09 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

Further to the recent actuarial valuation results for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the confirmation that the fund is now in surplus, the Employer contribution is being reduced with effect from April 2023.

The Clerk advised that the Agreement had been signed on behalf of the Council to accept the proposal to reduce the contributions.

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/01#10 Finance

i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2022/2023.

Received and Noted

ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.

The Sub-Committee reviewed the EMR accounts to ensure they were still necessary and adequate.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

Unanimous

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that the Election Costs EMR (Code 323) be closed and the balance of £2123.00 be transferred into the General Reserve.

FP23/01#11 Finance - Bank Reconciliations

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the third quarter of the financial year 2022/2023.

Councillor Utting reported he had concluded checks for the period October – December 2022 and confirmed he was satisfied that the accounts were in order.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/01#12 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP23/01#05 above refers)

Commercial in Confidence

Property Portfolio / Asset Management Review

[Item deferred from 15th November 2022 meeting FP22/11#91]

To receive the confidential report on the Council's property portfolio and consider the conclusions and recommendations.

The Sub-Committee recognised the aim of the Review included the consideration of office accommodation, in addition to the use of the Council Chamber for meetings. The report whilst making a number of recommendations, concluded there was no perfect solution to overcoming the challenges and constraints.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

Unanimous

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that from May 2023 for the period of one year, that a pilot takes place to hold off site Full Council/Management meetings within the wards and that the Council Chamber becomes the main office space with the current office being utilised as a committee meeting room.

Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]

(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

- i) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*
- ii) to consider the outcome of the tender procurement process and accept the recommendation in relation to the awarding of the contract*
- iii) to receive a verbal update on the funding application process*

The Chairman reported on a productive meeting which had taken place that week with the Architects to look at the tender selection process and a way forward had been agreed. Work with the consultants on putting together the funding bid was in progress and a start date for the project was dependent on the outcome of the application.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/01#13 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 14th March 2023

VAT Report/Budget Carry Forward figures /Old Chapel Lease

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.10pm

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Chairman

.....
Date



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, L Delves, E O’Driscoll, L Stark (Chairman), and P Symonds

In attendance: Mrs. S Robson - Town Clerk

There were two members of the public and no members of the press present.

FP23/03#14 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor J Utting

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

Absent – Councillors S Cole and K Fowler

FP23/03#15 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

FP23/03#16 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/03#17 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

Two representatives from Betzdorf Twinning Association reported that 36 people from Germany will be visiting in May. There are a number of social events arranged including the Civic Reception which the Council has a responsibility to host. It will be taking place on May 27th at 11.00am in St Mary’s Church.

The Chairman agreed to bring forward agenda item FP23/03#28

7.10pm Councillor Bartrum declared a non-registrable interest in Agenda Item FP23/03#28 being a member of the Twinning Association and left the meeting.

FP23/03#28 Twinning Association– Ross-on-Wye/Betzdorf

- i) to confirm proposed date of visit to Ross-on-Wye
- ii) to approve expenditure from the Twinning Budget 2023/2024 (4660/110) to provide refreshments for the civic reception

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to approve the sum of £650.00 for the Civic Reception including the costs of the Town Band. It was also agreed to include a Management Committee agenda item for April to consider the purchase of a suitable gift to present to the visitors.

7.15pm Councillor Bartrum returned to the meeting.

FP23/03#18 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – that agenda item FP23/03#31 - ‘Commercial in Confidence’ be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

FP23/03#19 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 10th January 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 10th January 2023 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/03#20 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- St Mary’s Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – no further progress
- Market House Lease –the lease is with the Courtyard trustees for signing
- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – no further progress, awaiting decision regarding VAT as there will be implications for the Council
- Transfer of Bank account – all forms have been completed and submitted, awaiting confirmation of switch date
- Insurance complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service – it was agreed not to pursue this as councillors felt there was little prospect of a reversal of the decision

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/03#21 Town Clerk’s Report

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- Corn Exchange Retail Unit – new legislation requires landlords of non-domestic properties to have a current Energy Performance Certificate. This has been carried out and the property has been given a category C rating
- St Mary’s PCC have requested a review of the footpaths within the Closed Churchyard area as they are deteriorating
- Ross Tennis Centre – the sub-committee were updated on a complaint received about the new lighting. It was agreed not to take any further action
- Energy Audit – the Clerk met the surveyor from Severn Wye Energy Agency on 9th March, the audits have been completed on the Market House, Corn Exchange and the Old Chapel, reports awaited

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/03#22 Town Clerk’s Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that the Market House lease had been signed by herself and the Chairman.

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/03#23

Finance

- i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2022/2023

Received and Noted

- ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts

Received and Noted

- iii) to approve carry forward budgets into Financial Year 2023/2024 for

a. Election Costs (4540/101)	£4,000
b. CCTV (4801/201 & 4802/392)	£26,000
c. Red Meadow (4942/361)	£6,000
d. Market House (4170/380)	£36,901

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to carry forward the stated sums into Financial Year 2023/24.

FP23/03#24

Finance – VAT

- i) to accept and consider the report commissioned in relation to the Council's obligations under current VAT regulations
ii) to confirm the Council's obligation for VAT reporting in relation to taxable supplies and authorise registration with HMRC
iii) to consider any requirement for action to be taken in relation to the current financial year

The sub-committee was advised there would be a need to re-state some of the income derived from business activities classed as taxable supplies. This would be completed before the year end close down to ensure the corrections could be reflected in the current financial year.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – to accept and note the report and confirm the requirement to register for VAT effective from 1st April 2022.

FP23/03#25

Fixed Assets

To receive and note the written report on Fixed Assets and consider and approve the updated register of Assets for Financial Year 2022/23.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – to receive and note the written report on Fixed Assets and approve the updated value on the Register of Assets for Financial Year 2022/23 at a total of £923,794.00 subject to any other additions to year end.

FP23/03#26

Policies

To review the Council's policy on the following and agree the frequency of the review period;

- Annual Investment Strategy

[Last Reviewed February 2022]

- Corn Exchange Lettings [Last Reviewed January 2021]
- Financial Reserves Policy [Last Reviewed February 2022]
- Mayor's Allowance [Last Reviewed February 2021]
- Purchasing Delegation Limits [Last Reviewed December 2021]
- Statement of Internal Control [Last Reviewed February 2022]

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

RESOLVED - to approve the proposed policy amendments with immediate effect subject to agreed minor revisions.

FP23/03#27 Finance – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)

To consider renewing the Council's subscription for 2023/2024 and approve expenditure for the fee in the sum of £2619.89 plus vat

The Sub Committee felt this was a useful service and offered value to the Council, therefore the renewal was approved.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to approve expenditure for the renewal subscription fee to continue the HALC membership for 2023/2024.

FP23/03#29 Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

i) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase

It was reported that the Case for Support to accompany grant funding applications is well in hand and there have been a number of letters of support already received from stakeholders.

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/03#30 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 16th May 2023

FP23/03#31 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP23/03#18 above refers)

Commercial in Confidence

Property Portfolio / Asset Management Review

To review the deferred recommendation on the Council's accommodation.
[Ref FP 23/01#12]

It was proposed to agree to move office accommodation and changes to the meeting venues for a one-year trial period.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – the sub-committee agreed to recommend to Management/ Full Council

- i) that the Council's offices move into the Old Chapel when it becomes vacant in the summer**
- ii) that Made in Ross be offered the upstairs accommodation in the Corn Exchange on a temporary basis subject to the work at the Market House going ahead**
- iii) that arrangements be made to book venues within all wards for Full Council/Management meetings with effect from May 2023 in an effort to increase public engagement and attendance**

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.05pm

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Chairman

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Date



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors L Delves, S Foreman, L Stark (Chairman), and J Winder
In attendance: Mrs. S Robson - Town Clerk
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

In the absence of the chair, Cllr Stark chaired the meeting.

FP23/05#32 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillors C Bartrum, S Freer, E O'Driscoll and J Utting

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

FP23/05#33 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

FP23/05#34 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/05#35 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

FP23/05#36 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

No confidential business to be transacted

FP23/05#37 Election of Deputy Finance & Property Sub-Committee Chair

Proposed: Councillor Winder

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

For: 3 Abstention: 1

RESOLVED – to appoint Councillor Stark to be the Deputy Chair of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee

FP23/05#38 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 14th March 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/05#39 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- St Mary's Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – no further progress
- Market House Lease – completed
- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – works had been put on hold pending the application for VAT registration. Report to July meeting with options.
- Transfer of Bank account is in progress, accounts are open with both banks at present whilst everything is migrated across
- HMRC – Application to register for VAT has been completed, awaiting confirmation

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/05#40 Town Clerk's Report`

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- St Mary's footpaths within the Closed Churchyard – quote awaited from the Lengthsman for resurfacing works
- Energy Audit – reports have been received for the Market House, Corn Exchange and the Old Chapel, agenda item for July meeting

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/05#41 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that in consultation with the Chair an additional sum of £500.00 was authorised for the VAT consultants as the work had been more complex than anticipated and additional support was required to enable the registration process to commence.

The Clerk had responded on behalf of the Council to a communication about its twinning association with Namutumba. This was only carried out after consultation with the Council's appointed representative on the Twinning Association. It was noted that the purpose of twinning was to encourage friendship and develop cultural links and that this provided a small contribution towards changing minds in Uganda. Whilst the concerns were not discarded lightly the aim of the twinning transcends politics and religion.

The Clerk confirmed that she had authorised expenditure for the Council's solicitor to upgrade the Possessory Title to Absolute for the Thomas Blake Memorial Gardens. The original title commenced twelve years previously so an application to HMLR could now be made for an application to upgrade the title.

7.20pm Councillor Bartrum arrived at the meeting

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/05#42 Finance

- i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2023/2024

Received and Noted

- ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts

Received and Noted

FP23/05#43 Finance - Bank Reconciliations

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2022/2023.

The Sub-Committee was notified that Cllr Utting had visited the office to carry out the financial checks and was satisfied that everything was present and correct.

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/05#44 Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]

(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

- i) *to confirm Terms of Reference and appoint councillors to the Working Group*
- ii) *to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

The Sub Committee agreed to defer this item until members of the Working Group (WG) could be present at the meeting. The Clerk was authorised to liaise with the WG members to draw up amended terms of reference to reflect the recent progress.

FP23/05#45 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 4th July 2023

Appointment of Financial Verifier/TOR Working Group Market House/Energy Audit Review

There being no further business the meeting closed 7.35pm

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Chairman

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Date



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors L Delves, S Freer, E O’Driscoll, L Stark, and J Winder
Ex Officio Member: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)
Substitute Member: Councillor J Vidler

In attendance: Mrs. S Robson - Town Clerk

There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

FP23/07#46 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillors C Bartrum, and S Foreman

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

FP23/07#47 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

Councillor Freer declared a Schedule 1 Interest in Agenda Item FP23/07#60 ii being a member of Made in Ross at the Market House.

FP23/07#48 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/07#49 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

FP23/07#50 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – that agenda item FP23/07#60 - ‘Commercial & Staff in Confidence’ be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 16th May 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 16th May 2023 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/07#52 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – works had been put on hold pending the confirmation of VAT registration. Options were briefly outlined, and a report will be prepared for the September meeting for discussion
- Closure of Santander Bank stalled due to arrangements for on-line banking at the new bank being delayed. On-line registration is in progress with signatories needing to complete further forms
- HMRC – VAT registration application made in March, referral to urgent team but still not confirmed

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/07#53 Town Clerk's Report`

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- Courtyard Theatre/Phoenix Youth Group – the Council has been approached for use of the Corn Exchange, discussions are on-going
- Financial Fraud – a Council tenant has been victim to email hacking and a subsequent on-line payment scam. Investigations with their bank are on-going to see if the funds to pay the lease can be recovered
- Town Council Website development – a quote has been sought for a cemetery map and search facility linked to an interactive map. Agenda item for future meeting
- External Audit – confirmation that the AGAR has been received and in the queue for processing

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/07#54 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

Nothing to report

FP23/07#55 Finance

i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2023/2024

Received and Noted

ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts

Received and Noted

FP23/07#56 Finance - Bank Reconciliations – Appointed Verifier 2023/2024

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

To appoint a verifier in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

RESOLVED – that Councillors Utting and Winder be confirmed as the Appointed Verifiers for 2023/2024

FP23/07#57 Property – Energy and Resource Efficiency

To receive and consider written reports from Severn Wye Energy Agency .

Councillors noted the recommendations and agreed that where delegated authority was appropriate, the low cost measures should be acted upon by officers. It was discussed that projects needing capital funding should be considered at a future date depending on further discussions on the Council's property portfolio and potential outcomes.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/07#58 CCTV Installation

To approve underwriting of capital expenditure costs to install a CCTV system at the Ropewalk to a maximum amount of £6500.00 (Budget Code - 4802/392).

Councillors considered the proposal to fund the capital costs for the skatepark camera should the grant application by Herefordshire Council not be successful. There were some concerns raised in connection with funding retrospective work and the need to ensure a commitment would not invalidate any conditions within the funding application.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – to approve the capital expenditure of £6500.00 to install a CCTV camera at the Ropewalk subject to confirmation about HC's funding application conditions.

FP23/07#59 Finance & Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

i) to confirm Terms of Reference and appoint councillors to the Working Group

The draft Terms of Reference were approved subject to amendments to include authority for signing documents should be in consultation with the Clerk.

Proposed : Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Winder

RESOLVED – to approve the amended Terms of Reference and confirm appointment to the Working Group of Councillors Freer, O'Driscoll and Utting along with the Clerk.

ii) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase

The Clerk confirmed the funding applications were well in hand and that a lot of peripheral work had been necessary to comply with the outcomes for the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This would see a number of legacy projects working with a range of stakeholders to deliver new initiatives.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/07#60 i) In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP23/07#50 above refers)

Commercial & Staff in Confidence

to receive confidential written report on previously tabled Recommendation from the Amenities Service Review, for recommendation to the Management Committee for approval.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to recommend to the Management Committee that approval under delegated authority be given to the Clerk to award a five-year contract as outlined in the confidential report, subject to a satisfactory meeting with the two contractors shortlisted to deliver a presentation.

FP23/07#61 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 5th September 2023

Income generation – toilets and car park/ Cemetery Searcher software

8.05pm Councillor Freer having declared an interest in Agenda Item FP23/07#60 ii) left the meeting

FP23/07#60 ii) In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP23/07#50 above refers)

Commercial & Staff in Confidence

to consider request from existing tenant for an extension of twelve months to the lease.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to recommend to the Management Committee that an extension to the lease of six months should be offered to the tenant at a commercial rate.

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.20pm

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Chairman

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Date



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, L Delves, S Freer, E O'Driscoll, L Stark, and J Winder

In attendance: Mrs. S Robson - Town Clerk

There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

In the absence of Cllr Utting, Cllr Stark, took the chair.

FP23/09#62 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillors S Foreman and J Utting

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

FP23/09#63 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

Councillor Freer declared a Schedule 1 Interest in Agenda Item FP23/09#73 ii being a member of Made in Ross at the Market House.

FP23/09#64 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/09#65 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

FP23/09#66 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Stark

Seconded: Councillor Winder

Unanimous

RESOLVED – that agenda item FP23/09#75 - 'Commercial in Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 4th July 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 4th July 2023 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/09#68 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- Closure of Santander Bank has been authorised. Arrangements to move to on-line payments are complete. Changes to the bank mandate are proposed to include the Clerk as a signatory to the account to enable input of payments. An item for the next Management meeting to be tabled along with revision to the Council's Financial Regulations. The chair thanked the staff for their efforts.
- HMRC – VAT registration application made in March, referral to urgent team but still not confirmed, continued chasing and local MP is taking up a complaint
- Energy & Resource Efficiency Reports – a first draft Energy Policy has been prepared, works to carry out some of the recommendations are in hand
- CCTV – HC has finalised the bid along with the Police & Crime Commissioner for Safer Streets Home Office funding which will match fund 50% of the costs for the proposed three new cameras. Authority by HC to commence the installation at the Ropewalk should be imminent.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/09#69 Town Clerk's Report`

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- Marches Energy Grant – investigations into the feasibility of making an application for pv panels for the Old Chapel are in hand
- Elections – enquiries with HC have been made as to the invoices for the contested elections in the two wards in May
- Corn Exchange – a quote has been sought to carry out an insurance valuation on the oil paintings in the Council Chamber
- Ross Tennis Centre – next phase of development, opinions sought on two possible options
- Deanhill Park – the application to register the land is going through, an Ordnance Survey assessor's report has been requested by HMLR to obtain further information on the site and location
- Old Chapel – quotes are being sought on behalf of HC so that a sum can be set aside for dilapidations. This will be written into the new lease agreement to enable redecoration to be carried out at the end of the term. The lease preparations are in hand
- Larruperz Centre – an insurance site visit took place in June to consider Risk Improvement, a report outlining three conditions was circulated. The deadline for completion of works is 11/9/2023. A meeting with the Chairman is scheduled for this week to ensure everything is completed in time

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/09#70 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

The Clerk reported that twinning expenses had been approved for the former mayor as a contribution towards the costs to travel to Betzdorf in September on behalf of the Mayor to represent the Council at an event to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of Betzdorf.

The Council's insurance policy had been renewed effective from 1st August 2023. This is the second year of a three-year Long-Term Agreement. The premium had risen in line with inflation costs.

Expenditure for a new CCTV camera at the Ropewalk had been authorised in line with approval given under FP23/07#58.

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

FP23/09#71 Finance

i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2023/2024

Received and Noted

ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts

Received and Noted

iii) To approve expenditure of £860.00 to instal Cemetery Searcher software to allow on-line cemetery data searches and mapping facility on the Town Council website

The Sub-Committee felt this would be a useful initiative for people searching for their family history, and open access to cemetery records would be beneficial.

Proposed: Councillor Delves
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Winder

RESOLVED – to approve expenditure of £860.00 plus VAT to install Cemetery Searcher Software on the Council's website.

FP23/09#72 Contract Renewal

i) to consider a renewal to the Service Proposal for the supply of Employment Law/ Health & Safety services for a three-year term 2023-2026
[existing contract with Worknest due to end 9th October 2023]

The Sub-Committee reviewed the comparison table set out in the written report and agreed that whilst two of the suppliers offered a comparable service the third one had not supplied sufficient detail to confirm what cover was included. Councillors expressed their view of the need to make sure adequate cover was available to assist the smooth running of the Council whilst mitigating risk.

ii) to approve expenditure for a three-year contract from the Professional Fees Budget (4555/101)

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Freer

RESOLVED – to approve Contractor 1, Worknest, and authorise the Clerk to arrange for a three-year contract to include the optional legal expenses cover, e-learning access, and Employee Assistance Programme at an annual cost of £3748.75 plus VAT.

FP23/09#73 Finance & Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Freer, O’Driscoll, and Utting] (Terms of reference – FP23/09#59)

i) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase

The Clerk confirmed that the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) application was submitted at the beginning of August and the anticipated determination date was the end of September/beginning of October. The Stage 2 application to the Wolfson Foundation had been submitted at the end of August with a determination date of December and the Pilgrim Trust Stage 1 had been submitted at the beginning of August and a Stage 2 application was invited, the deadline for confirmation would be by the end of November.

It was noted there had not been a meeting of the Working Group (WG) as the Clerk was continuing to progress the funding bids but that once the outcome of the NLHF bid was known the WG would be arranging a meeting with the architects to consider the appointment of the main contactor.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

ii) to confirm additional expenditure for professional fees to complete the final stages of the funding bid applications

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
For: 5 Abstention: 1

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to confirm additional expenditure for professional fees to a value of £2100.00 plus VAT to enable the completion of the final stages of the funding bid applications.

iii) to discuss making a recommendation to the next Management Committee to request approval for expenditure from the Property Portfolio EMR, once the outcome of the bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund is known

The Sub-Committee was advised of the need to consider the timetable to select the main contractor due to the long lead time for the ordering of materials for the stone repairs and the need to have approval for expenditure to move towards the next stage.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to recommend to the next Management Committee a request for approval of expenditure from the Property Portfolio EMR, once the outcome of the bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund is known, to enable the appointment of the main contractor.

FP23/09#74 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 12th December 2023
Budget/Toilets Income

FP23/09#75 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item

(Item FP23/09#66 above refers)

Commercial in Confidence

To consider confidential report outlining potential options for income generation at Homs Road car park.

The Councillors recognised that free parking means there is often not a quick turnaround of cars, and therefore it is an inefficient use of the space. The introduction of time limits or charging could be options that might alleviate this to provide a more effective space. It was noted some users of the car park have abused the free facility and there have been problems with vandalism, damage and some cars being abandoned. The Sub-Committee's aim would be to regulate use, and it was recognised that some consultation would be necessary.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
For: 5 Abstentions: 1

Seconded: Councillor Freer

RESOLVED – to request that a further report with full costings should be prepared, along with proposals for consultations to be discussed at the Council Away Day in October before a formal proposal to Council be made.

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.30pm

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Chairman

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Date



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the
Finance & Property Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 7.00pm
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors J Utting (Chair) C Bartrum, L Delves, S Freer, and L Stark

In attendance: Mrs. S Robson - Town Clerk and Mrs. C Boyles – Deputy Town Clerk
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

FP23/12#76 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillors Foreman and O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

Absent – Councillor Winder

FP23/12#77 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

FP23/12#78 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

FP23/12#79 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

FP23/12#80 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

There was no confidential business to be transacted.

FP23/12#81 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 5th September 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 5th September 2023 be signed as a correct record.

FP23/12#82 Action Review Summary

To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.

- Homs Road Car Park – the options report for committee was delayed due to further investigations being made with HC about enforcement. A full report outlining a new proposal will be brought to the February meeting
- CCTV – on hold pending further information

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/12#83 Town Clerk's Report`

To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)

- Bank Mandate has been amended to add the new Town Clerk
- Elections – further enquiries with HC have been made as to the invoices for the contested elections in the two wards in May. Confirmation has been given that the invoices will be processed in December
- Deanhill Park – the application to register the land has been completed but the Land Registry would only grant a Possessory Title as there were no title deeds to prove ownership. A calendar reminder has been set up for the statutory time when an application for Title Absolute can be made
- Old Chapel – an invoice for the rent plus dilapidations has been issued. Confirmation has been sought from HC that their move from the building will be complete before the lease end date
- Weather Station – the biannual inspection report of the tower has been completed by the Met Office and given an unqualified 'pass'. It has identified several minor defects and an email enquiry regarding rectification is outstanding

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/12#84 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

Nothing to report

FP23/12#85 Finance

i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2023/2024

Received and Noted

ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts

Received and Noted

iii) to authorise expenditure of £700.00 to purchase the sales ledger module which includes the first-year annual support and maintenance

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to authorise expenditure of £700.00 plus VAT to purchase the Rialtas sales ledger module.

FP23/12#86 Finance - Bank Reconciliations 2023/2024

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the year to date.

Councillor Utting confirmed he had checked the accounting records for the year to date and reported everything was balanced and in order. It was reported that some of the dates on the reports had thrown up minor issues which were due to a system error.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/12#87 Budget

[Financial Regulations \(Section 3 Annual Estimates and Forward Planning\)](#)

- *agree the one-year budget forecast as part of the 2024/ 2025 budget submission,*
- *ensure that any capital project (including building maintenance) has an appropriate project plan identifying the schedule of works (to an appropriate level of detail) and the source of funds e.g., budget or reserves,*
- *identify impact of capital projects on revenue budget for the first 5 years.*

The Sub-Committee considered the entire budget and discussed the tax base information and its impact on the precept. Councillors were keen to try and set a balanced budget for the next financial year and accepted the challenges that would be bring whilst delivering significant projects in addition to a range of services which had all been hit by inflationary cost increases. The in-principle agreement of setting a 5% increase to the Band D was preferred and the Clerk was asked to put together a report showing several scenarios for consideration at the January Management Committee meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

RESOLVED – to agree the one-year budget forecast as part of the 2024/2025 budget submission.

FP23/12#88 Finance – Internal Audit 2023/2024

To receive and accept the Interim Internal Audit Report dated 12th October 2023 and consider the conclusions.

Thanks were given to the staff for their work in maintaining robust systems to comply with the audit regime.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to receive and accept the Report and note the conclusion that no issues require formal comment or recommendation.

FP23/12#89 Finance - Twinning

To review the Council's Twinning Policy and consider proposals for distribution of the budget and agree the terms and conditions for funding allocations.

8.30pm Councillor Freer left the meeting

8.33pm Councillor Freer returned to the meeting

After some discussion it was agreed to defer making any decision and to arrange an informal meeting with representatives from the Twinning Associations to establish what support is required and how the Town Council can offer assistance.

FP23/12#90 Insurance Valuation

To receive the written report and confirm the outcome of the valuation undertaken on artwork in the Council Chamber.

The Clerk advised that the insurers had been informed of the valuation to ensure that adequate cover was put in place in the event of a loss. It was agreed there needed to be some thought given as to a future location for the artefacts held by the Town Council and this would form part of the discussion at the Management Committee meeting in January relating to the office move to The Old Chapel.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/12#91 Policies

i) to adopt the proposed Asset Register & Disposal Policy

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

RESOLVED – to adopt the proposed policy with immediate effect.

8.58 pm It was agreed to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes to enable the business to be concluded.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

FP23/12#92 Finance & Property - Market House Working Group

[Councillors Freer, O’Driscoll, and Utting] (Terms of reference – FP23/12#59)

iv) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase

v) to confirm progress on arrangements for signing the Contract for building services

The Clerk confirmed that the Pilgrim Trust application had been successful and an award of £25k had been made. The outcome of the bid to the Wolfson Foundation had been confirmed with an offer of up to £50k subject to terms and conditions.

The Letter from the Architect to confirm the appointment of the main contactor had been issued, the next steps would be to consider a proposed timetable and look at a schedule of payments. A meeting date for the parties to sign the Contract was awaited.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

FP23/12#93 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 6th February 2024

Larruperz Review Insurance recommendations/Toilets Income/Homs Road Car park charges/Twinning

There being no further business the meeting closed 9.01pm

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Chairman

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Date