

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **F&GP Meeting** held on Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 7.00pm in The Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Winsor, Fyfe, Carlson. Also, Clerk, RFO and a member of public.

Youth & Community Centre – Charlie Barr addressed the meeting. She is the Chair of the Y&C Centre and wishes to meet annually to update Town Council. She advised the centre has so many youth groups and age groups attending, it is amazing! A new group for years 9 and up is opening. They were lucky to receive £45k from the National Lottery Grant over three years and have now applied for £90k over 5 years. Matched funding is available from Greenham Trust. The limit from public donations is £5k annually but there are different set ups for Councils, etc. Charlie is concerned they may struggle to find the £19k anticipated shortfall. However, they do have some money in reserve and currently receive £10k over 3 years from Greenham Trust and could approach them for an increased donation. Options include applying to other local parishes such as Kintbury and Chilton Foliat. Town Council give £15k over 3 years. A breakdown of figures was provided to the meeting, but year-end accounts are not yet complete. They have a new trustee and new youth councillor.

FGP20230074 Apologies for absence – Cllrs Simpson, Schlanker.

FGP20230075 Declarations of interest – None

FGP20230076 Minutes - To approve and sign the minutes of the F & GP meeting on 12th July 2023

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Minutes were agreed as a true record.

FGP20230077 Receive an update on actions –

A useful meeting took place with Shield and a survey will be arranged with Cllr Schlanker and Shield. Dates for delivery of the Christmas trees have been scheduled. A contingency budget is needed for repairs.

Everyone active, the group who now manage the Leisure Centre, will be attending next Full Council meeting with representatives from West Berks Council.

There are still some problems occurring with the Deputy Clerk's PC.

Cllr Schlanker had confirmed the £85K financial protection applies to Town Councils.

ACTION: Maintenance man to level the fridge and cooker in the Croft Field main room and seal gaps.

The following actions were outstanding:

ACTION: Cllrs Winsor and Simpson to complete their control checks.

FGP20230078 Propose acceptance of the bank reconciliation

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Winsor

Resolution: Accept bank reconciliation totalling £490,258.68 as accurate for July 2023.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Accept bank reconciliation totalling £441,095.49 as accurate for August 2023.

- FGP20230079 Propose acceptance of cash flow (circulated)**
Proposed: Cllr Winser
Seconded: Cllr Carlson
Resolution: Agree cash flow.
- FGP20230080 Update on renewal terms of Tennis Courts Lease** – The Clerk advised we are still waiting for agreement from West Berks Council on the later opening hours requested. All other terms have been agreed. The renewal is due January 2024.
- FGP20230081 Review the effectiveness of safe-guarding public money** – The RFO explained the only changes to the document are the use of a charge card instead of petty cash. The card gets paid off automatically every month from the main bank account and has a limit of £275.
Proposed: Cllr Winser
Seconded: Cllr Fyfe
Resolution: Acceptance of the effectiveness of safe-guarding public money document.
- FGP20230082 Internal Controls document – Receive feedback on the items from councillors.**
Cllr Carlson has completed all his allocated checks. A few minor changes were suggested and have been made. Cllrs Winser and Simpson have yet to do theirs.
ACTION: After today all the control checks will have been allocated for this year. It was agreed to start the checking process again in April 2024. Note the calendar.
- FGP20230083 Internal Control document – Allocate items to councillors for review.**
- Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests – **Allocated to Cllr Carlson**
 - Understand how to seek and manage consent – **Allocated to Cllr Carlson**
 - Update of policies & privacy notices – **Allocated to Cllr Carlson**
 - Data Retention & Disposal – **Allocated to Cllr Carlson**
 - Procedures to detect, report & investigate personal data breaches – **Allocated to Cllr Carlson**
 - Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in office or safekeeping – **Allocated to Cllr Winser.**
 - Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members’ Interests and Gifts of Hospitality – **Allocated to Cllr Fyfe.**
 - Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members – **Allocated to Cllr Schlanker.**
 - Declaration of Acceptance of Office – **Allocated to Cllr Simpson.**
- FGP20230084 Update on obtaining leasehold of Bridge St War Memorial Gardens.** The Clerk reported a meeting took place with our solicitor to talk through all the info gained so far. They are now in receipt of the paperwork and are investigating the best way forward. There was a suggestion that Town & Manor may hold some of the old records in their archive.
ACTION: Clerk to approach Town & Manor to request they check their archives.
- FGP20230085 Croft Field Centre update. Consider purchase of chairs – Refer to report.**
NOTE: The building was handed over to us on Friday 25th August but we are still waiting the building regulations certificate. There are some concerns with the electricals and some missed bits of paintwork.
Proposed: Cllr Winser
Seconded: Cllr Fyfe
ACTION: **Resolution:** Purchase one of the non-padded chairs to see if it is suitable. Reallocate £2k from EMR Election Costs to EMR Croft Field Centre to cover future purchases. Agreement for purchase of 50 suitable chairs and a sack barrow was given.
ACTION: Obtain quotes for; mirrors to go above the sinks in the washrooms, a noticeboard for the foyer to display health & safety info and instructions, and a coat rail.
A quote for an acrylic HTC logo is being sought.
Proposed: Cllr Fyfe
Seconded: Cllr Winser
ACTION: **Resolution:** Pay Abacus £10k including VAT.

FGP20230086 Skate Park Project Completion and promotion.

ACTION: Cllrs Schlanker and Keates to do an official check of the park when back from leave. Cllr Fyfe expressed his concern that the path is not compacted enough, and grit is getting on the ramps.

FGP20230087 Propose acceptance of charge card policy (circulated)

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Accept charge card policy.

Confidential PART 2

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

FGP20230088 Note staff TOIL and holidays. TOIL and holiday were noted.

FGP20230089 Consider additional staff hours.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Fyfe

ACTION: **Resolution:** Accept £2,302 annual increase to budget. This will include an extra 2 hours for the Deputy Clerk role, rising from 18 hours a week to 20 hours per week. It will include the payment of all staff to attend their scheduled evening meetings. Changes will be incorporated into the monthly salaries commencing from this month.

FGP20230090 Update on debtors – No debtors.

FGP20230091 H2036 hours for agreement -

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Pay employee no. 2, 7 hours for H2036 work subject to agreement by Cllr Hudson.

FGP20230092 Staff vacancies – The positions have been advertised on Indeed, on our website and through Penny Post. There has been a good response.

Meeting closed 8.30pm

Review of Effectiveness of safeguarding Public Money

Background

There is a requirement for members to ensure that the Council has in place safe and efficient arrangements to safeguarding public moneys.

This review should be undertaken on an annual basis.

Review

Attached is a review of the Council methods of managing the risks and Members are encouraged to question and raise issues if they are not satisfied with the way the arrangements are presently managed.

Conclusion

Subject to any amendments that Members may wish to make, Council are requested to confirm that: -

The attached risk review of effectiveness’ of safeguarding Public monies meets with Council’s requirement.

Sharon Prance
Responsible Financial Officer
24th August 2023

Risk	Demonstration how Council Meets it Responsible	Frequency	Who is Responsible
Loss of Petty Cash through lack of Control	Petty Cash is no longer used within the office, as all purchases are made using a separate charge card.		
Payment of Invoices – Risk of fraudulent payments	Invoices received by RFO. Reference is made to Order Book to confirm order placed. Invoices are checked for accuracy and input on to Omega. Interim payment runs produced and reviewed by Town Clerk and all Members. These are paid when authorised by at least 2 Members. A full payment run is produced and circulated in advance of the monthly Town Council Meeting. RFO signs payment run to certify agreement of invoices and this is countersigned by the Mayor and Deputy (or alternative Councillors) at the Full Council meeting. Payments online are authorised by two members. This is carried out either within the Office or within Members’ homes. Two members have the ability to approve payments from home on Barclays website.	Monthly Payment Run At least 2 interim payment runs	RFO / Town Clerk/ Members
Failure to bank funds paid to Council	RFO issues invoices mainly on Croft Field. Admin Assistant pays cash and cheque funds in to bank. RFO checks paying in book, inputs into Omega System. Payments received are reported to Council Monthly. Customers mainly pay via BACS.	Weekly	Clerks assistant/ RFO
Access to Bank Account	The bank accounts all require two members to sign.	Weekly	RFO/Town Clerk/ Members

	RFO/Town Clerk have authority to view the Barclays Bank Account and originate payment, however it requires two members to authorise any payment. Any change to mandate must be approved at Full Council.		
Control of Plastic Cards / Cheque Book	Cards & Cheque book will be held in safe when not in use. Company Charge card held (£2,800 limit) by Town Clerk. Separate Petty Cash charge card (£200 limit) is held by Admin Assistant. RFO reconciles statement monthly to order book. Charge card automatically debited to bank account by Direct Debit.	Daily	RFO
Bank Accounts	RFO reconciles all bank accounts monthly. Produces a reconciliation report with supporting documentation. Sends it to Town Clerk / Chairman of Finance and F&GP members for review. Appears on the Bi-monthly Finance & General-Purpose agenda.	Monthly	RFO/ Town Clerk/Chairman of Finance
Invoicing from Bookings at Croft Field and Triangle Field	Admin Assistant controls bookings. Request for invoicing passed to RFO to undertake and issue. RFO undertakes to chase outstanding debts.	Weekly	RFO/Town Clerk
Management of Fixed Term & Deposit Accounts	Fixed term Deposits are diarised and now follow Investment Policy guidelines with RFO reporting to F & G P meeting. Other savings held at Nationwide Building Society and Newbury Building Society are reviewed at the same time.	Usually Annually	RFO
BACS Payments	Barclays System when originating payments warns of any new bank sorting code / bank accounts not paid before. RFO to check these payments to invoices and if necessary, with suppliers before remitting funds.		RFO
Back up of Omega computer accounts	RFO backs up Omega accounts twice a week onto Sharepoint. The system is also backed up monthly onto a separate hard drive held in the office safe.	Weekly	RFO
Back up of Sage payroll	The SAGE payroll software is	Monthly	RFO

	cloud based, so is automatically backed up. It is also backed up monthly onto a separate hard drive held in the office safe.		
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FGP20230085 Consider quotes for chairs in the Croft Field Activity Centre

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report to: F&GP committee 13th September 2023

Agenda Item No FGP20230085: Consider quotes for chairs in The Croft Field Activity Centre

Background With the recent refurbishment of The Croft Field Activity Centre, it has been brought to attention that there is not enough adequate seating available for hirers. The chairs which were used previously have been deemed unsuitable due to general wear and tear and need replacing.

During the recent Grant and HIB Awards held in the centre, foldable chairs were borrowed from The Hub and these provided adequate, comfortable seating for all attendees. They were also easy to set up and fold away. See photos below of room layout with 40 chairs.



When not in use the chairs could be stored in one of the lockable storage rooms and although consideration has been given to a designated trolley to store them on, this would be cumbersome and difficult to wield down the small step into storage. After speaking to HTC’s maintenance man, it is recommended that a small trolley would be the best option which could be used for other purposes too.

For the purpose of these quotes I have therefore sourced for 1 x trolley and 2 x chair options. As The Hub purchased their chairs in June – October **2018** they have not been contacted for comparative costs.

Options

For the Committee to decide whether to proceed with the purchase of new chairs and trolley for The Croft Field Activity Centre

Option One seating:

Mogo Comfort Plus **Padded** Seat Folding Chair

[Mogo Comfort Plus Padded Seat Folding Chair - Mogo Direct | Cost Cutters UK](#)

This chair is the same as those that are used in The Hub and has a comfortable padded seat.

Mogo Comfort Plus Folding Chair- Royal Blue

£44.52 IncVAT

£37.10 ExVAT

Lead Time 5-7 Days

SKU MFCCP-Royal Blue

Bulk Buy Discount

Buy 1 or more for **£44.52** IncVAT **£37.10** ExVAT, each

Buy 50 or more for **£42.85** IncVAT **£35.71** ExVAT, each and **save 4%**

Buy 100 or more for **£41.51** IncVAT **£34.59** ExVAT, each and **save 7%**

Buy 200 or more for **£40.34** IncVAT **£33.62** ExVAT, each and **save 9%**

Colour Royal Blue



Option Two seating:

Mogo **Classic** Plus Fan Back Folding Chair-Royal Blue

[Mogo Classic Plus Fan Back Folding Chair - Mogo Direct | Cost Cutters UK](#)

This cheaper option chair does not have a padded seat but may be easier to wipe clean and the seating less likely to 'rip' or mark easily.