

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **F&GP Meeting** held on Wednesday 15th March 2023 at 7.00pm in The Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Winsor, Simpson, Schlanker, Fyfe (left early), and Knight (arrived later). Also, Clerk, RFO (present via Zoom), Cllr Downe and a representative from Hungerford Nursery.

FGP20230017 Apologies for absence – None

FGP20230018 Declarations of interest – None

FGP20230019 Minutes - To approve and sign the minutes of the F & GP meeting on 11th January 2023

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Minutes were agreed as a true record.

Minutes - To approve and sign the minutes of the Staff Sub-committee meeting on 21st February 2023

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Minutes were agreed as a true record. 2 abstentions.

FGP20230020 Receive an update on actions – The following actions were outstanding from 11th January:

ACTION: Internal controls: Insurance and fidelity. Cllr Schlanker yet to do.

It was noted the estate agents have been instructed to delay the rent increase until April to compensate for a brief breakdown in heating.

All other actions were complete or on the agenda.

The following actions were outstanding from 21st February:

ACTION: Clerk to put in writing to staff the changes to the hybrid working.

It was noted the maintenance man had obtained a quote for a fire stable door which was £4,500.

ACTION: Another quote for a stable door can be sought.

The RFO advised the effect per person for the one day's extra holiday from April is approx. half a day each. The details will be on Bright HR from 1st April.

FGP20230021 Propose acceptance of the bank reconciliation

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Accept bank reconciliation totalling £607,873.89 as accurate.

The RFO advised this sum will reduce this month as end of year invoices from WBC are due.

FGP20230022 Consider grant for Nursery using CIL funds – (this agenda item was taken first due to a member of public being present). Cllr Downe advised all state schools have been given money for green energy. The nursery has received several quotes for solar panels. Installation does not fall under permitted development as the nursery is in a conservation area. The advice received is to embed the panels in the roof, so they are flush rather than fix them on top, however this is a more expensive option, and more than the grant given. This is a request from the Nursery for financial support of £2,000. Their application will be on the Good Exchange platform next week

so can be match funded. Our financial support would also benefit the nursery by reducing their running costs. They are struggling with budgets as it is.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Fyfe

ACTION: **Resolution:** Support the nursery charity 'shoal of friends' by donating £2,000 on the Good Exchange using CIL funds.

ACTION: Cllr Downe to advise the RFO the Good exchange application number.

FGP20230023 Consider any transfer of outstanding budget balances to ear marked reserves including:

- **Allocation of civic expenses underspend of £500 plus a proportion of underspent contingency budget for Coronation expenses**

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Allocate £4,000 to EMR for the Coronation, using £1K from civic expenses (4014), £250 from mayoral expenses (4010) and £2750 from contingency (4099).

- **Allocation of tourism support budget of £2,000 towards the Heritage project**

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Fyfe

ACTION: **Resolution:** Allocate £2,000 to EMR for the Heritage project, from the tourism support budget.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Allocate balance (after paying Clerk's hours) from (4130) H2036 to EMR. One abstention.

Cllr Knight entered at 7.35pm.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

ACTION: **Resolution:** Allocate £654 from (4291) Croft Field repairs/maintenance to EMR for a full asbestos survey of the Croft Field building.

FGP20230024 Note annual increase to fees of CPI rate (10%) and potential increase to Leisure Centre contribution based on RPI inflation. WBC has advised our contribution to the Leisure Centre for 2023-24 is estimated at £39,580. This is a significant increase from our current contribution of £34,718 for 2022-23. We have only budgeted for £36,900.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

ACTION: **Resolution:** Request justification from WBC particularly as they are receiving money from the government to help leisure centres with swimming pools.

FGP20230025 Consider quote of £295 to review cost for recommended electric works.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Not to proceed with quote and wait until next EICR is due for the library building and review then.

FGP20230026 Mid-year review of deposits held – It was noted only £13,671 of our EMR are currently unallocated. The RFO recommended moving some funds to CCLA. Refer to private report.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Not to move any funds at present and review in June/July.

ACTION: A cashflow statement is needed due to the large on-going projects.

FGP20230027 Review and propose acceptance of Investment Policy.

Proposed: Cllr Knight

Seconded: Cllr Schlanker

Resolution: Propose acceptance of investment policy with no changes.

FGP20230028 Internal Control document – Receive feedback on the following items from councillors;

Cllr Schlanker - Insurance and fidelity – yet to review.

Cllrs Simpson and Winser checked the following -

- Orders placed in accordance with Financial Regulations
- Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure
- Payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted.
- Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked.
- Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the cashbook.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Confirm the processes checked were all in order. Cllr Winser added it was interesting to see the processes in place.

FGP20230029 Internal control document – Allocate the following items to councillors for review

- Regular budget monitoring – **Allocated to Cllr Winser**
- Regular reconciliation of bank accounts verified and signed off by a non-signatory Councillor. **Allocated to Cllr Winser**
- Reporting of inter-bank transfers reported to Parish Council. **Allocated to Cllr Knight.**
- Contracts of employment for staff. **Allocated to Cllrs Simpson and Winser.**
- Scrutiny of grants awarded and declared in cashbook. **Allocated to Cllr Knight**
- Staff contracts annually reviewed. **Allocated to Cllrs Simpson and Winser.**
- Records updated to reflect relevant legislation. **Allocated to Cllr Schlanker.**

ACTION: Cllrs to review internal controls (as above) and feedback to next F&GP.

FGP20230030 Consider options for a commemorative shield.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winser

ACTION: **Resolution:** Decline the offer for another shield. One abstention.

FGP20230031 Update on application to charity commission to obtain freehold of Bridge St War Memorial garden

An email has been received from the solicitor advising the charity commission has rejected our application. We are in receipt of an email detailing the reasons why.

ACTION: Town Clerk to speak to local solicitor asking what would happen if we requested to dissolve the charity.

FGP20230032 Request for decision on Phase 2 build of Croft Field – There is currently no budget or aspiration to complete phase 2. It is on our action plan as a long-term objective.

ACTION: Advise our contractor and project manager.

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.

FGP20230033 Note staff TOIL and holidays.

TOIL noted as follows up to the end of February: Employee no.1(9), 2(0),13(0),14(7),15(0).
Holidays noted as follows: Employee no.1(6hrs), 2(5 days),13(1 day),14(5 days), 15(0)

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: Resolution: Pay employee no.1, 9 hours overtime for February. No TOIL will be paid from April without prior agreement.

Cllr Fyfe left the meeting at 8.20pm.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winsor

ACTION: Resolution: Pay employee no.1, 4 hours overtime for March.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Knight

ACTION: Resolution: Pay employee no.14, 7 hours overtime.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: Resolution: Employee no.14 will write to the Clerk requesting 5 days holiday be carried forward to the next financial year.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Knight

ACTION: Resolution: Employee no.2 will write to the Mayor and Cllr Winsor requesting 5 days holiday be carried forward to the next financial year.

FGP20230034 **Update on debtors** – No debts outstanding.

FGP20230035 **H2036 hours for agreement**

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

ACTION: Resolution: Pay Clerk for 11 hours up to end of March 2023

FGP20230036 **Update on any outstanding actions from staff committee** – Refer to item FGP20230020.

FGP20230037 **Consider request for extra hours for employee no.14.**

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

ACTION: Resolution: From 1st April 2023 increase employee no.14's hours by 2 a week, from 12 hours a week to 14 hours a week.

Meeting closed 8.35pm