

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee
held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 28 June 2023**

Present Councillor G Ward (In the Chair)
Councillors S Abbott, J Brook and M Jackson

In Attendance Councillor N Brakspear
Mrs K Gilby (Finance and Planning Officer)
D Martin (Chief Executive)

In Attendance Online Councillor T Ellis

F&A 01/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors H Belcher and R Hopkinson.

F&A 02/23 Public Question Time and Petitions

Representatives of three organisations attended the meeting in person or online and asked the Committee to support their grant applications (*see Minute F&A 05/23*).

F&A 03/23 Declarations of Interest

To receive any Declaration(s) of Interest under Corsham Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

There were none.

**F&A 04/23 Matters Arising from the Notes of the Finance and Administration
Committee meeting held on 26 April 2023**

F&A 29/22 Annual Review of the Risk Management Strategy - The risk register had been updated and issued to all Councillors.

F&A 05/23 Grant Applications (Second Round)

Four grant applications were considered.

Resolved

- i) That Wiltshire Citizens Advice be awarded £750 towards resources to provide online and telephone support regarding life problems, to residents of Corsham. WCA would be encouraged to explore linking with Corsham Foodbank.
- ii) That Corsham Orcas be awarded £750 towards swim hats for each member, to celebrate the Club's 50th anniversary. It was agreed that the Corsham Town Council logo would be used on the hats. Corsham Orcas was encouraged to apply for further funding in 2024 if required.
- iii) That Corsham Badminton Club be awarded £750 to expand the number of club sessions to meet demand.

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- iv) That, subject to additional financial and publicity information being acceptable to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, Carer Support Wiltshire be awarded £750 towards Corsham based Care Cafés to support local unpaid carers.

F&A 06/23 Detailed Income and Expenditure Accounts (including the Town Hall)

The Committee reviewed and noted the Income and Expenditure Accounts, Financial Report and the breakdown of Earmarked Reserves.

Resolved

That a Strategic Plan Working Group Meeting be arranged in July/August ahead of draft budget setting to review earmarked reserves and consider assigning unallocated sums to specific projects. This would be reviewed in the context of the level of general reserves and funds which might be required for the larger capital projects under discussion such as Public Realm Improvements, Park Lane Workshop/Park Place Allotments, Arnold House and Guide Hut, Springfield Skate Park, Springfield BMX/Pump Track, Corsham Station, Town Transport Plan and Energy Efficiency Improvements/Asset Management at the Town Hall.

- i) Attracting and retaining staff - Further to previous meetings, the Chief Executive and Head of Finance and Administration had explored suggestions to attract and retain staff, such as flexible working, compressed hours, job applications via CVs, the amount of leave which could be carried forward, selling back annual leave and training. The next step would be to consult staff more formally on the flexibilities suggested above to see if they are worth introducing wholly or in part.

Resolved

To formally consult staff on suggested flexibilities to see if they are worth introducing wholly or in part.

- ii) Technical Assistant Vacancy – The Chief Executive requested that the number of hours for current part-time vacancy (27 hours per week) be increased to deal with the growing workload within the team. Several large projects were underway or about to start and they required additional staff time. The projects included Biodiversity Action Plan implementation, new workshop, carbon reduction, asset management plan, review of the ground maintenance contract, and service delegation/asset transfer. It was recommended that the hours be increased by up to 10 per week depending on the applicant (37 hours is full-time). The post could be advertised on that basis. The additional cost was likely to be under £6,000 in the first 12 months. This could be funded from savings made while the post was vacant, with any shortfall coming from the Service Delegation/Asset Transfer budget.

As a temporary measure, all staff had been invited to help cover part of the role through secondment. One person had offered to assist, and this would be pursued. It might also be possible to arrange temporary cover for the person seconded. This would be advertised locally.

Resolved

- a) To increase the hours of the Technical Assistant post from 27 per week to a maximum of 37 (full-time);
- b) To pursue the opportunity to second an existing member of staff to partially cover the role whilst it is vacant;
- c) To recruit to cover gaps in the existing role of the staff member who is seconded.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 8.28pm. There was one member of the public present and two members of the public online at the start of the meeting and none at the end.

CHAIRMAN

DATE