

MINUTES

Committee: Finance & Personnel Committee
Date: Monday, 14 October 2024
Time: 7:00pm
Venue: Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road, Cranbrook EX5 7DR

Present

Cllr Les Bayliss
Cllr Kevin Blakey
Cllr Ray Bloxham (in the chair)
Cllr Colin Buchan

Also Present

Cllr Kim Bloxham, Cranbrook Town Council
Cllr Kevin Kendall, Cranbrook Town Council
Janine Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Cranbrook Town Council

F&P/24/42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sam Hawkins and Vincent Wilton.

F&P/24/43 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

No declarations of interest were made, or dispensations granted.

F&P/24/44 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Les Bayliss seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2024 as a correct record.

F&P/24/45 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public made representations, asked questions or gave evidence.

F&P/24/46 GRANTS POLICY

a) Review of the Grants Policy

The Committee reviewed the suggested amendments within its grants policy as circulated with the agenda and agreed to the following additional changes:

The policy should “benefit the people who live and work in Cranbrook” but not include the verb “visit”.

The following sentence should have the word “and” added as highlighted: “Groups applying for a grant must be based within the parish of Cranbrook, not-for-profit *and*/or have charitable status.”

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to agree the Council’s grants policy as amended.

Signed

13 January 2025

b) Grant Feedback

The Committee thanked the Cranbrook Girl Guides and Home-Start Exeter, East & Mid Devon for their grant feedback.

The Committee requested previous grant feedback to be submitted to the Committee in cases when repeat applications were made.

F&P/24/47 2024-25 QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee considered the following documents:

- a) Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading report for the second quarter of the 2024-25 financial year
- b) Cashbook transactions report for Cash Books 1 (bank accounts), Cash Book 2 (credit card) and Cash Book 3 (Younghayes Centre)

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to approve the above documents.

F&P/24/48 BANK RECONCILIATIONS

On 24 June 2024, the Council had re-appointed Cllr Vincent Wilton as its signatory for bank statements and quarterly bank reconciliations (ref. minute 24/84(f)). Cllr Wilton reported that he had verified and signed the bank reconciliations and the underlying hard copy bank statements relating to the first quarter of the 2024-25 financial year in accordance with Financial Regulation 2.6.

It was proposed by Cllr Les Bayliss, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to approve the bank reconciliations dated 30 September 2024.

F&P/24/49 RECEIPT AND USE OF SECTION 106 FUNDING

The Committee noted the documentation relating to the receipt and use of Section 106 funding as circulated with the agenda.

F&P/24/50 TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2025-26

The Committee considered the first draft of the Town Council's budget for the 2025-26 financial year.

The draft budget was based on the assumption that the average Band D figure would remain stable at £256.03 as per the Council's five-year plan. Considering inflation rates, residents had been benefitting from a reduction in real terms as the Town Council had been keeping its council tax stable since 1 April 2018.

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to approve the draft budget for the 2025-26 financial year for the full Council's consideration on the principle that the average Band D figure would remain stable at £256.03.

F&P/24/51 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulates that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

Signed

13 January 2025

F&P/24/52 EMPLOYMENT OF A HANDYPERSON

The Committee considered a report regarding the potential employment of a handyman.

It was proposed by Cllr Les Bayliss, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to

- a) proceed to recruiting a full-time employed Handyman on the basis that the Council had budgeted a 0.5 full-time equivalent post in during the entire 2024-25 financial year, more than half of which had passed.
- b) delegate authority to the Clerk, the Chair of the Council, the Chair of the Finance & Personnel Committee and the Chair of the Amenities Committee to agree the Handyman job description and person specification.
- c) offer House2Home Exeter to continue on the current ad-hoc basis until the new Handyman was recruited.

The Committee noted that the Council's draft budget for the 2025-26 financial year had been prepared on the basis of a full-time employed Handyman.

F&P/24/53 INGRAMS SPORTS PITCHES MAINTENANCE

The Committee considered a report regarding the future of the maintenance of the playing surfaces at the Ingrams sports pitches.

It was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to

- a) recommend to the full Council to agree to slit, aerate, rake and brush the playing surfaces monthly at a cost of £325 per monthly visit for a period of six months by Peter Woodman Pitch Services.
- b) request a budget from Peter Woodman Pitch Services for the 2025-26 financial year.

The meeting closed at 7:47pm.

Signed

13 January 2025