**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held in the Anzac Room, Community House on Tuesday 24th October 2023 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllr Sue Griffiths (Chair of Committee), Cllr Mary Campbell (Vice Chair of Committee), Cllr David Seabrook (Chair of Council), Cllr Isobel Sharkey (Vice-Chair of Council), Cllr Nikki Fabry, Cllr Cathy Gallagher.

**Officers**: George Dyson (Town Clerk), Zoe Malone (Responsible Financial Officer).

1 member of the public was in attendance.

1. **PF911 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair opened the meeting at 19:30, welcomed everyone, asked that phones be put onto silent, and gave a brief reminder of the building fire procedures, as well as informing the Committee that the next Bingo is tomorrow (25th October 2 – 4pm, and that Remembrance Day is Sunday 12th November 2023.

1. **PF912 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

1. **PF913 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Donovan and Cllr Veck.

Cllr Fabry is substituting for Cllr Donovan.

Cllr Cheta was also absent.

1. **PF914 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

There were no declarations of interest.

1. **PF915 TO ADOPT THE COMMITTEE’S MINUTES OF 12TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Proposed By:** Cllr Sharkey  **Seconded By:** Cllr Campbell

The minutes were **agreed** and **adopted.**

1. **PF916 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023.**

**Proposed By:** Cllr Seabrook  **Seconded By:** Cllr Griffiths

The minutes were **agreed** and **adopted.**

1. **PF917 TO NOTE THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023.**

Cllr Campbell highlighted that she was present at this meeting but did not appear on the draft minutes.

The Committee **noted** the draft minutes.

1. **PF918 TO REVIEW THE 2022/23 FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO-DATE: -**

**1. Finance Officer’s report**

**2. Bank account & Bank Reconciliation statements (for signing)**

**3. Income & Expenditure report**

**4. Balance Sheet**

**5. CIL & S.106 report (income, expenditure & bids)**

**6. List of payments (for approval)**

**7. Review of external contracts, SLA’s & their ongoing authorisations**

**8. Funding report for buildings equipment maintenance work**

The Committee **noted** the reports.

It was proposed that the Committee approve the signing of the Bank account & Bank Reconciliation statements, and approve the list of Payments.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Campbell **Seconded by:** Cllr Seabrook

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

Cllr Fabry asked about whether all bank signatories had now been set up correctly. The Clerk confirmed that all signatories are now as per the resolution at the Annual Council meeting.

Cllr Gallagher asked for clarification relating to the CIL report and the building equipment maintenance which the RFO answered.

1. **PF919 TO NOTE THE OUTCOME OF THE 2023/24 INTERIM ANNUAL AUDIT & AGREE ANY ACTIONS REQUIRED.**

THE RFO summarised the report. The Committee **noted** the interim annual audit.

1. **PF920 TO DISCUSS THE COMMITTEE’S ACTION PLAN AND AGREE ANY FURTHER ACTION**

The Clerk introduced the action plan and reminded the Committee that they had discussed at the last meeting that the action plan would be updated at this meeting.

Cllr Gallagher suggested that the building survey item could now be updated to reflect that the conditions survey has been undertaken and that further ongoing requirements may now be required from this.

Cllr Seabrook highlighted that although the hearing loop has been repaired, there isn’t any signage notifying potential users about this.

1. **PF921 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS ON SETTING THE 2024/25 BUDGET REQUIREMENTS**

The RFO introduced the item, emphasising that this is a draft budget for discussion only and not the final version. Each Committee budget was report as follows:

Policy & Finance: The Chair introduced and highlighted that the Community House maintenance budget might need increasing.

Planning & Highways: Cllr Campbell introduced, commenting the reasons behind the significant increase in grass cutting costs.

Civic & Community Events: Cllr Sharkey asked why there is a Summer Fair budget still included for next year. The RFO explained that this would be carried over for the 2025 Summer Fair.

Leisure, Amenities, & Environment: Cllr Sharkey introduced and explained that most of the budget increases for the Committee were linked to inflation, and that there was a new cost centre being added for allotments.

Personnel: Cllr Gallagher introduced and explained the reasoning behind the proposed salaries budget.

1. **PF922 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMUNITY HOUSE DOWNPIPE CCTV SURVEY**

The Clerk introduced the item and explained the background. The Committee briefly discussed which budget the cost would come from and the guarantee offered with the works.

It was proposed that the Committee agree to the recommended works in the report, subject to confirmation that there is a guarantee on the works completed.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Campbell **Seconded by:** Cllr Sharkey

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF923 TO CONSIDER DIGITAL DEVICES FOR MEMBERS**

Cllr Sharkey introduced the report, which was generally supported by the Committee to ensure that the Council is inclusive for all members. Cllr Seabrook also commented that training may be required in the use of any digital devices.

It was proposed that the Clerk email out to members to see how many would take up the offer of a tablet device and report back to Committee.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Sharkey **Seconded by:** Cllr Fabry

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF924 AGREE TO ALLOCATION OF SOLAR PANEL REBATE**

The RFO introduced the report and recommendations, the Committee discussed the possible allocation of the funds.

It was proposed that the Committee agree to the recommendation in the report to earmark the money for the heating in the Community House Main Hall.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Seabrook **Seconded by:** Cllr Campbell

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal by majority, with 5 in favour and 1 against.

1. **PF925 TO NOTE THE COMPLETION OF REGISTRATION OF THE FIELDS IN TRUST DEED OF DEDICATION FOR THE PEACEHAVEN COMMUNITY ORCHARD**

The Committee **noted** the communication from the Land Registry.

1. **PF926 TO DISCUSS A CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY FOR COMMUNITY HOUSE**

The Chair introduced the item and gave some background information.

It was proposed that we obtain 3 quotes for Carbon surveys for the Hub and Community House.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Griffiths **Seconded by:** Cllr Seabrook

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal by majority with 5 in favour and 1 abstention.

1. **PF927 TO AGREE TO DISPOSE OF THE PEUGEOT VAN**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Seabrook **Seconded by:** Cllr Campbell

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to dispose of the van.

1. **PF928 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE CYBER ESSENTIALS CERTIFICATION FOR 2024/25**

There was a brief discussion on the item and the Clerk answered some questions about the certification and its benefits.

It was proposed to proceed with the Cyber Essentials certification in the new financial year.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Campbell **Seconded by:** Cllr Gallagher

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF929 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:30PM.**

The Date of the next meeting was confirmed as 12th December 2023 at 7.30pm.

1. **PF930 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Sharkey **Seconded by:** Cllr Campbell

The Committee **resolved** to exclude press and public from the following items.

*1 member of the public left at this point*

**CONFIDENTIAL**

***In accordance with Standing Order 3(d) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press are excluded from the discussion of the following items:-***

1. **PF931 AGED DEBT ANALYSIS.**

The Committee **noted** the aged debt analysis.

1. **PF932 TO DISCUSS & AGREE ANNUAL/MONTHLY RENT INCREASES FOR FACILITIES IN 2024/25**

It was proposed to agree to a 2% increase across the board.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Gallagher **Seconded by:** Cllr Seabrook

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF933 TO DISCUSS & AGREE ROOM HIRE CHARGES FOR FACILITIES IN 2024/25**

It was proposed to agree to the recommendation in the report.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Gallagher **Seconded by:** Cllr Campbell

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF934 TO DISCUSS & AGREE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT CHARGES IN 2024/25**

It was proposed to agree to the recommendation in the report.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Fabry **Seconded by:** Cllr Gallagher

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF935 TO DISCUSS & APPROVE ADMIN FEES FOR TICKET SALES**

There was a brief discussion in which the Committee felt the proposal represented extremely good value and the need to ensure that any money taken is handled transparently and through the correct accounting processes.

It was proposed to agree to the recommendation in the report.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Seabrook **Seconded by:** Cllr Sharkey

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF936 TO AGREE THE ENGAGEMENT OF A CONTRACTOR**

The Clerk introduced the item and gave a brief background.

It was proposed to agree to the engagement of the contractor on a rolling monthly basis for up to 3 months.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Fabry **Seconded by:** Cllr Campbell

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF937 TO RECEIVE AND AGREE RECOMMENDATION FROM LEISURE, AMENITIES, AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REGARDING CENTENARY PARK PATHWAY TENDERS**

It was proposed to agree the recommendation from the Leisure, Amenities, and Environment Committee.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Gallagher **Seconded by:** Cllr Fabry

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

1. **PF938 TO AGREE THE RUNNING CLUB STORAGE CONTAINER LICENCE**

It was proposed to agree to the Park Run storage container licence.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Fabry **Seconded by:** Cllr Gallagher

The Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

*There being no further business the meeting ended at 21:21.*