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Wivenhoe Town Council

MINUTES of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held in the Council Chamber, 77 High Street on Monday 30 September 2024 at 7:00pm **Chair Approved**

Present: Cllr Guy (Chair), Cllr Hutchings, Cllr Burke, Cllr Andrews & E Buckley (RFO)

09.30/01 Apologies for absence: Cllr Widgery and Cllr Hailes-Morley. Apologies received and accepted.

09.30/02 Declarations of Interest: None

09.30/03 Minutes of the last meeting: The approval of the minutes for the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on 21 August 2024 were proposed by Cllr Hutchings and seconded by Cllr Andrews with all in agreement.

09.30/04 Three year future plan for the Council: Cllr Guy informed the committee that after speaking to estates, finance need to make a start on the three year plan. Cllr Guy will assist the RFO to start to put it together. Key issues were discussed like the new cemetery. Cllr Burke reported that the neighbourhood plan will require work over the next few months, which will help with the councils future plan. Cllr Hutchings raised concerns over the asset list, ensuring that the council are reporting all assets and are fully insured. The RFO will speak to AH to discuss the list and ensure that it is complete and an accurate record.

09.30/05 Minibus: The future of the minibus was discussed by the committee. It was also discussed if the minibus could be hired and what expenses this would be to the council. The RFO mentioned that a different licence and insurance would be required to hire the minibus for reward. It was discussed if any other community groups would be able to replace the minibus current duties. The committee decided that a working group should be set up to discuss this in further depth as the minibus is an asset to the community groups and needs further planning. Cllr Hutchings reported on the University using electric vehicles, which is something the council should consider. Fundraising was also mentioned. The garage had produced a list of repairs that it would expect the minibus to require over the next year. It was decided that to keep the minibus running all the work required on the vehicle would be undertaken, but not the cosmetic work, until a decision was made.

09.30/06 VAT: The RFO reported that HMRC have reviewed the further information they requested and confirmed that the return was correct and will be refunding the VAT for the claim.

09.30/07 AGAR: The completed 2023/24 AGAR has been received and signed by PKF Littlejohn with an except for note. This is due to the vehicle assets being revalued on insurance value in the year 2023/24 and the figures had not been changed on the 2022/23 asset value. PKF Littlejohn confirmed that the council can revalue their assets in a way they find acceptable, but we need to change the value on the previous year so the figures are comparable. We do not need to change the AGAR now it has been signed and the RFO confirmed that the completion of audit has been published and displayed on the website and noticeboards.

09.30/08 Community Fund Policy: Cllr Guy reported to the committee that the proposals they had put to FTC last month about the £2,500 virement for the community fund budget to go towards the community day had not been approved. Discussions were had about the funds awarded and how the fund could help in the best interest of the community groups. The committee decided that more details would be required

to make an informed decision about the cost of the community day. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

A application was received from the Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group for help with hiring inflatables for the group and also to purchase new toys and equipment. The committee discussed the benefits of the group to the younger community and the parents who attend. The committee would like to recommend to FTC, that £300 be awarded to the group.

An application from Open Air Shakespeare was received for the sum of £350. The committee discussed that the targeted audience is not just the local community, it does not meet the policy criteria as tickets are sold at commercial rates for the event. This application was not approved by the committee.

09.30/09 Update from the Personnel and Finance meeting held on 21 August: EB informed the committee that these items will constantly stay on the agenda, whilst work is undertaken to update them. An internal control report was presented to the committee. Cllr Hutchings proposed that the internal control report is recommended for approval at FTC, this was seconded by Cllr Burke, with all present in agreement.

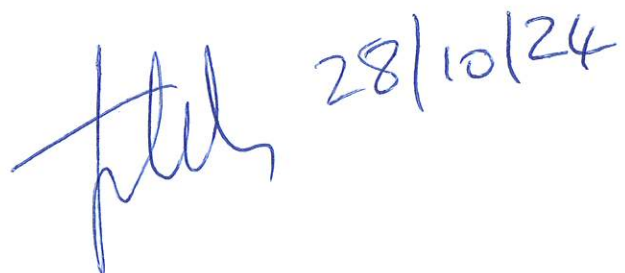
It was also requested that a calendar of dates and timelines be completed for the finance items which are required throughout the year.

09.30/10 Office late night opening: The Wednesday late night opening of the office, has been running since the start of the summer months. The RFO reported that most nights there was three at most members of the public coming into the office. Now the evenings are getting darker, the safety of the staff was discussed and the benefit to the residents. It was agreed that the office could now revert to closing at normal times during winter and the committee would discuss the options of opening late again at similar times next year. The committee requested that the website is updated and from today it will revert to the normal office opening hours this week.

09.30/11 Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday 28 October 2024 at 7pm.

09.30/12 Exclusion of Press and Public: In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council is invited to consider if the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items(s) owing to the confidential nature of the business.

Part A of the meeting was closed at 19:56

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