



BROMYARD & WINSLOW TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Monday 12th February 2024 at 7pm
 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
 Rowberry Street, Bromyard.

Minutes
 F24/01 - F24/11

Members Present: Cllrs: M Franklin (Chairman), L Law (Vice-Chair)
 G Churchill, Dr D Dunne-Thomas, L Holman and R Page.

Officers Present: Karen Mitchell (Town Clerk)

F24/01 Apologies for Absence *LGA 1972 S85 (1)*
 Apologies were received from Cllr Clare Davies (holiday).

F24/02 Declarations of Interest and written requests for dispensations.
Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI No. 1159
 Cllr R Page declared a Non-Registrable Interest in F24/04,4. Payment to iD Creative Design, by way of a familial connection.
 Cllr G Churchill declared a Non-Registrable Interest in F24/11,1 as a Trustee of Bromyard Recreation Ground Charity.

F24/03 Minutes *LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)*
It was RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 11th December 2023.

F24/04 Finance

1. Income & Expenditure by Account Code
It was RESOLVED to receive and accept the Income & Expenditure by Account Code for the months of December 2023 and January 2024.
 Referring to actual expenditure against budget, it was noted that a small number of budget lines had exceeded their allocated amounts. Members agreed that the variances could be justified, therefore no virement of funds was required at this time.
2. Bank Reconciliation Statements
It was RESOLVED to receive and accept the Bank Reconciliation Statements for December 2023 and January 2024.
 Following a query raised in respect of balances, **it was RESOLVED** that a statement of the Council's earmarked reserves be provided as a recurring item on each ordinary Finance Committee agenda.
3. Cllr Holman was appointed to verify the Bank Statements and Petty Cash book and sign the reconciliations and original bank statements as evidence of verification.

Initials..... Date

4. Accounts for Scrutiny

Invoices		Net	Vat	Total
C J Bayliss	Boiler repairs Heritage Centre	81.30	16.26	97.56
ABA Cleaning	Window Cleaning November	112.00	22.40	134.40
Citizens Advice	Weekly outreach sessions Jan-March 24	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
Invoices cont'd.		Net	Vat	Total
Bromyard Info	Job advert Town Maintenance Operative	40.00	0.00	40.00
PC Logix	IT support contract/security/telephony	136.24	27.24	163.48
iD Creative Design	Design Banners A44 - 50 % deposit	600.00	0.00	600.00
Pettifers	Housekeeping/cleaning items	85.87	17.17	103.04
Nifty Communications Ltd	Marketing & Communication services February	833.33	166.67	1,000.00
Space Mobiles Ltd	Portaloo hire Tenbury Road car park	495.00	99.00	594.00
A & E Fire & Security	Heritage Centre - Intruder alarm monitoring contract	295.00	59.00	354.00
A & E Fire & Security	Heritage Centre - Intruder alarm test/inspection; new battery/install	224.37	44.87	269.24
Debit Card Payments				
Microsoft	MSFT online services - staff	28.20	5.64	33.84
Microsoft	MSFT online services - Cllrs	58.50	11.70	70.20
Totals		5,489.81	469.95	5,959.76

Members examined hard copies of the invoices against the payment schedule.

It was RESOLVED to confirm payment of all invoices listed on the payment schedule.

5. Payments Summary

It was RESOLVED to receive and accept the report of payments for the period 1st December to 31st January 2024.

Cllr Holman to initial the payment list.

6. Petty cash

It was RESOLVED to approve the requested top-up of petty cash in the sum of £100.

F24/05 End of Grant Report

It was RESOLVED to receive and note the End of Grant report from Bromyard Community Arts for the Lantern procession project on 18th November 2023.

F24/06 Internal Audit

Members received and reviewed the interim internal audit report for the financial year ended 31st March 2024, and considered four recommendations contained therein.

1. Audit Point C. Risk Management & Insurance: Recommendation to increase internal crime insurance to cover more than the maximum sum held at any point during the year.

Members were advised that the cost to increase its Fidelity Guarantee insurance cover to £450,000, will be £48.91 to the policy end date in May 2024. At the current rate, the annual figure would be approximately £165, inclusive of tax.

It was RESOLVED to approve the cost of £48.91 to increase the cover for Internal Crime to the policy end date in May 2024.

Initials..... Date

2. Audit Point E. Income: car parking accounts to be published as a separate document to evidence the income and expenditure related to the car parks and that any surplus has been spent in accordance with the regulations outlined in Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

This information will be published in the next financial year.

3. Audit Point H. Assets and Investments: Recommendation to amend items listed as nil value on the Asset Register to reflect the original cost (where known) or proxy cost if purchased, or to a nominal £1 if gifted/donated/transferred to the council.

Any necessary amendments will be incorporated in the review of the Asset Register for the year-ended 31st March 2024.

4. Audit Point I. Bank and Cash: Referring to the £85,000 protection limit offered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), council may wish to consider transferring funds from relevant accounts to maximise the protection available to it.

This matter to be added as a separate item on the next Finance Committee agenda for consideration. The Clerk to investigate available options for savings accounts for the next meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the interim internal audit report for the year ended 31st March 2024 be accepted and to approve the agreed actions in response to the internal audit points listed 1-4.

F24/07 Terms of Reference

Members reviewed the existing Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee be adopted without change.

F24/08 Financial Controls

Members reviewed the following financial control documents:

1. Financial Regulations – no changes identified.

The Clerk reported that The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has been reviewing its 2019 Model Financial Regulations and that a new version will be made available to HALC members in the near future.

It was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations be recommended to Full Council for adoption without any changes until such time as the updated model regulations currently being revised by NALC, are made available.

2. Management of Internal Control Systems – no changes identified.
3. Internal Financial Controls – Day to Day Procedures – no changes identified.

Referring to Car Park machine Receipts (page 2) it was noted that this paragraph would need to be reviewed when the new car parking arrangements are in place. (PR23/61 & C23/125, 2.2 refers)

IT WAS RESOLVED that 2) Management of Internal Control Systems, and 3) Internal Financial Controls – Day to Day Procedures be presented to Full Council for adoption without change.

Initials..... Date

F24/09 Financial Policies and Procedures

Members reviewed the following documents:

1. Grant Policy and Procedure (including application form)
2. Reserves Policy

IT WAS RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the Grants Policy & Procedure, and the Reserves Policy be adopted without change.

3. Risk Management Policy & Assessment

Page 5 – Risk to third party, property or individuals – Public liability cover to be amended to £10 million.

IT WAS RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the Risk Management Policy & Assessment be adopted as amended.

F24/10 Lengthsman Scheme 2024/25

Balfour Beatty has informed the Council that funding for the 2024/25 financial year has reverted to £60 per km of C and U roads, down from £140 per km in 2023/24. The increased funding in 2023/24 was due to an £180,000 underspend in 2022/23 which was used to top-up the 2023/24 funding pot.

The Town Clerk provided an update regarding the funding for the Lengthsman Scheme. Ward Cllr Stoddart, (Bromyard Bringsty Ward) had confirmed that the Herefordshire Council budget for the 2024/25 financial year had been approved on 9th February. As a result, the funding for the Lengthsman Scheme has been doubled. Under the revised funding, each parish council will now be eligible for a basic rate of £120 per km of C and U roads.

For Bromyard, which has 21.2 km of C & U roads, the base funding amounts to £2,544. Additionally, the Town Council may apply for match funding, where the Town Council's contribution of £2,544 can be matched by Herefordshire Council, resulting in a total funding of £7,632.

It was RESOLVED to confirm enrolment in the Lengthsman scheme for the 2024/25 financial year and submit a formal request for match funding.

F24/11 Correspondence

1. Members discussed a request for additional grant funding from the Bromyard Recreation Ground Charity for The Party in The Park event scheduled for 5th May 2024.

Referring to the current regulations, which allow only one application per financial year, it was noted that the charity had already received a £1,000 grant for new waste bins the current financial year.

Following discussion, **it was RESOLVED** that the Clerk advise the charity to complete a grant application form as per the standard procedure. The Council will consider an application over the usual £1,000 limit. To expedite the decision-making process, it was agreed to consider the application at the Full Council meeting on 26th February 2024, rather than wait until the next Finance meeting in April.

2. There was no other correspondence to bring to the attention of the Committee.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:45pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE