



BROMYARD & WINSLOW TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on
Monday 9th December 2024 at 7pm
 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
 Rowberry Street, Bromyard.

MINUTES
F24/44 - F24/52

Members Present: Cllrs Churchill, Davies, Franklin (Chairman), Law (Vice-Chair), Magson and Page.

Officers Present: Karen Mitchell (Town Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr J Lloyd

F24/44 To receive apologies for absence *LGA 1972 S85 (1)*
 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr D Dunne-Thomas (health).

F24/45 To receive any Declarations of Interest and written requests for dispensations. *Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI No. 1159*
 None declared.

F24/46 Minutes
It was RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meetings held on Monday 14th October, 2024 and the 18th November 2024. *LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)*

- F24/47 Finance**
1. Income & Expenditure by Account Code
It was RESOLVED to receive the Income & Expenditure by Account Code as at 30th November 2024.
 2. Bank Reconciliation Statement
It was RESOLVED to receive the Bank Reconciliation Statement for November 2024.
 3. Verification of Bank Statements and Petty Cash
 Cllr Law was appointed to verify the Bank Statements and Petty Cash book and sign the reconciliations and original bank statements as evidence of verification.
 4. Balance Sheet
It was RESOLVED to receive the Balance Sheet for November 2024.
 5. Accounts for Scrutiny

Invoices		Net	Vat	Total
Nifty Communications	Marketing & communication services - Dec	833.33	166.67	1,000.00
Space Mobiles	Portaloo hire - TR car park November	396.00	79.20	475.20
<i>Continued on next page</i>				

Invoices (continued...)		Net	Vat	Total
Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd.	Interim Internal Audit. YE 31.03.2025	388.00	77.60	465.60
PC Logix	IT support/backup/security/phones & broadband	131.25	26.25	157.50
Direct Debit Payments				
West Mercia Energy	Gas - Heritage Centre October 24	90.06	4.50	94.56
West Mercia Energy	Gas - Old Vicarage October 24	419.03	83.81	502.84
West Mercia Energy	Electric - Old Vicarage/Heritage Centre October 24	340.34	68.07	408.41
West Mercia Energy	Electric - Tenbury Rd toilets October 24	51.33	2.57	53.90
West Mercia Energy	Electric - Parish lamps October 24	88.36	17.67	106.03
West Mercia Energy	Electric - Parish lamps October 24 (sensor)	13.12	2.62	15.74
West Mercia Energy	Electric - Tenbury Rd charging point October 24	26.92	1.35	28.27
Direct Debit Payments				
Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd	Microsoft Online services/email Cllrs	82.82	16.56	99.38
Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd	Microsoft Online services/email Staff	30.90	6.18	37.08
Totals		£ 2,891.46	553.05	3,444.51

Following scrutiny of hard copy invoices against the payment listing, **it was RESOLVED** to confirm payment of all invoices on the above payment schedule.

6. Payments Summary

It was RESOLVED to receive and accept the report of payments for the period 1st October to 30th November 2024. Cllr Law to initial the payment listing.

7. Statement of Earmarked Reserves

It was RESOLVED to receive a Statement of Earmarked Reserves as at 30th November 2024.

F24/48 External Audit 2023/24

The External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP have completed the review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31st March 2024 and have issued the External Auditor Report and Certificate.

The Auditor's final report certifies that:

'On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.'

It was RESOLVED to note the conclusion of the external audit for the year ended 31st March 2024.

F24/49 Internal Audit 2024-25

Members reviewed the interim internal audit report for the financial year ending 31st March, 2025. The internal auditor noted that the council's systems and procedures were well established and followed.

Referring to item c. Risk Management and Insurance, the internal auditor had commented that monthly council balances have ranged from £400,000 to £498,000, suggesting a potential need to increase the Internal Crime cover limit. However, members agreed that, due to impending expenditures on repairs and renewals, the council's balances would decrease substantially, making the current fidelity cover sufficient for future needs.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the interim internal audit report for the year ended 31st March 2025 be accepted and adopted, with no matters requiring action.

F24/50 Grants

End of Grant Report

It was RESOLVED that the End of Grant report from the Bromyard Downs Common Association be received and accepted.

F24/51 Budget and Precept 2025/26

Members reviewed the draft budget (v.2) for the 2025-26 financial year, noting that the Town Clerk, Chairman, and Vice-chair of the Finance Committee had reviewed the budget in accordance with the resolution from the last meeting (Minute F24/43 refers).

The revised budget, as presented, reflected a net expenditure of £347,723 based on anticipated income of £94,847 and total expenditure of £442,570. To address the deficit, the Council could draw from its general reserves, estimated to be around £149,979 by the end of March 2025. However, in order to comply with the Council's Reserves Policy, a minimum of three months of operating costs must be retained, leaving approximately £55,000 available to offset the precept.

It was resolved to maintain the £4,000 increase for the Christmas Lights grant.

Cllr Law expressed concern about reducing the repairs and renewals budget, citing necessary works on the Old Vicarage and the Heritage Centre as highlighted in the condition report, and emphasised the importance of addressing these issues. It was suggested that the Council explore available grants to alleviate some of the financial pressure.

With one amendment, a revised draft budget reflecting a net expenditure of £351,723 and a precept request of £296,744, was agreed.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the draft budget for 2025/26 be presented to the Full Council meeting on 16th December for approval and consideration of the precept.

F24/52 Correspondence

To note any correspondence received.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:00pm

CHAIRMAN DATE