

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE COMMITTEE held in Rickards Hall at 7.30 pm on Monday 14 November 2022

Present: Cllrs, J Aldridge, A Baker, A Damodaran, M Gemmell Smith, A Layland, N Lloyd (Chairman), S McGregor and S Sumner (Vice Chair)

In attendance: Responsible Finance Officer and Town Clerk. No members of the press or public were present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received, noted and accepted from Cllrs Compton and Todd.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OR PREDETERMINATION

None.

3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON [10 October 2022](#)

Resolved: that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 10 October 2022 be duly signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting; pages 9791-9792.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

None.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS (Financial report pack; 6-monthly review))

To approve the Financial Income and Expenditure Statements as of the 30 September 2022 (*as published with the meeting papers*):

5.1 To ratify the expenditure up to 31 October 2022

Members,

Ratified: the expenditure to the 31 October 2022.

5.2. To approve the list of expenditure for payment

Members,

Resolved: the list of expenditure payments.

5.3 To review expenditure over £500 up to 31 October 2022

Members,

Ratified: the expenditure over £500 up to 31 October 2022.

5.4 To receive the income up to 31 October 2022

Members,

Ratified: the income to the 31 October 2022.

5.5 To review the Financial I&E Budget Comparisons report

Members received and,

Resolved: the financial Income and Expenditure comparisons budget up to the 30 September 2022.

5.6 To Review the I&E Account up to the 30 September 2022

Members received and,

Resolved: the Income and Expenditure Account to the 30 September 2022.

5.7 To review the Consolidated Balance Sheet

Members received and,

Resolved: the Consolidated Balance Sheet.

5.8 To receive the Financial Summary Cashbook up to 31 October 2022

Members received and,

Resolved: the Financial Summary Report Cashbook.

5.9. To Confirm the Bank Reconciliation statements and Procurement Card for September and October 2022

Cllrs Lloyd confirmed he had seen the reconciliations. Members

Ratified: the Bank Reconciliation statements and Procurement Card statements for September and October 2022.

5.10 To approve and accept the transfers into, out of and between bank accounts

Members,

Ratified: the transfers into, out of and between bank accounts.

5.11 To note and advise on invoices outstanding over 3 months

Nothing to report.

6. OTHER FINANCE BUSINESS

6.1. To review the fees and charges for 2023

The fees and charges increase each calendar year, usually in line with inflation measured by the Retail Prices Index (RPI). The RPI for September 2022 was 12.6%.

Members,

Resolved: to make recommendation to the full Council, to increase the fees and charges, including the cemeteries charges, for 2023 in line with the RPI rate 12.6% (as published September 2022)

6.2. To confirm the Service Level Agreements (SLA) for 2023

The current SLAs: HOUSE £8,000; The Eden Valley Museum £6,500; Twinning £500. Members noted, the Twinning Association would be celebrating its Golden Anniversary, and final year of formal association in 2023.

Members

Resolved: to recommend to the full Council to continue with the SLA agreements and the following awards: HOUSE £8,000; Eden Valley Museum £6,500; and the Twinning Association £500.

6.3. To confirm the Lease rents for 2023

Leases and rent reviews differ slightly for each Club, with the actual invoicing charges effective from 1 April and in two equal payments. The review dates for each Club:

Cricket: annually on review date (1 January) by RPI at the rent review date

Nomads: two-yearly review February (*month agreement made*) by RPI published in the month preceding the review date – next increase 2023

Rugby: increase annually by RPI at the rent review date (*historically done with the fees and charges*)

Members noted the current (September) RPI rate was 12.6%, and

Resolved: to recommend to the full Council the lease rents for 2023 for Cricket Club, Rugby Club, Nomads Football Club by the RPI rate at the time of their individual review dates.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT

Members received the Internal Auditors (Keith Robertson) half-yearly interim review (October) report; this was also published on the [website](#). The reported was satisfied budgeting procedures, payroll and salaries procedures complied with audit standards. It was noted two charities accounts had now had the Council correctly listed as sole trustee.

Members,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to receive and accept the report.

8. UPDATE ON THE MAINTENANCE PLANS

Members received the updated 10-and-30-year Buildings Maintenance and Open Spaces Plans. The Buildings Maintenance Plans had been reviewed by the Buildings Manager, Town Clerk, RFO and Cllr Lloyd. These now reflected the full 10-and 30-year period up to 2052. With any of the projects, closer to each annual budget year, a more accurate view on the work time frame and costs would be assessed. The Open Spaces Plans had been reviewed, and information was in the process of being

transferred on to updated formatted spreadsheet. The main change was that the annual costs had been extracted and new budget codes would reflect this. The 10-year-plans cost summary sheet now identified the annual costs, 10-year maintenance and an overall annual total. There was also an adjustments tab which allowed a percentage increase that could be applied to see how this impacts future years. The Plans provide an indicative plan and cost.

Members were satisfied with the Plans, and

Received: the updated 10-and-30-year plans, with the annual costs under new budget codes (but still monitored through the Plans).

9. BUDGETS 2023-24

To consider the draft budget for 2023-24

Cllr Lloyd presented the budget for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This has been drafted by the Town Clerk and RFO during October, and in consultation with Cllr Lloyd. The draft budget had been prepared scrutinising every single expenditure code. Some estimates to inflation had been included for example, 6% to rates, but most has assumed similar costs (with some savings). Utilities for the buildings were in contract until June 2025. The budget had included the additional projects and budgets recommended to Finance by Council, Forward Planning, Personnel and Open Spaces.

Projects, code 1011:

- £1,500 for Rickards Hall sound system
- £5,000 new landscaping project

Events code 1171:

- £5,000 for coronation
- £1,000 Ready Steady

The draft budget was presented against last year's actual net, and the current six months' experience as a reference.

The main increase from this year's budget to next year is staff costs. The staff costs were not as dramatic as it looked. There was a marked lag in the National Joint Council (NJC) agreeing pay increases with the pay rise for 2022-23 only just being agreed. As a result, the staff costs for 2022-23 were forecasted approximately at £398,000, £25,000 more than budgeted. This had been the start point for the 2023-24 staff costs.

The Finance Committee expressed its appreciation for the hard work carried out by the Town Clerk and the RFO in preparing the budgets.

9.1 To receive the recommendations from the following committees for budgets 2023-24

9.1.1 Personnel Committee

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for staff costs as presented by the Committee minutes.

9.1.2 Open Spaces budgets cost centres (300s/3000s)

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for Open Spaces.

9.2 To Consider the budgets for the following

9.2.1 Council (100's/1000's)

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for Council.

9.2.2 Central Services (200's/2000's)

Members

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for Central Services.

9.2.3 Community Warden (400's/4000's)

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for Community Warden.

9.2.4 Emergency Planning (500's/5000's)

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for Emergency Planning.

9.3 To Consider the full budget 2023-24

9.3.1 Recommendation to full Council

Members unanimously,

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to accept the draft budget for 2023-24:

Total draft budget 2023-24				
	Proposal		Budget 2022-23	% change
Total Expenditure	£	770,641	£ 719,365	7.13%
Total Income	£	92,773	£ 73,218	26.71%
<i>Precept total needed</i>	£	677,868	£ 656,364	3.28%
Total Income	£	770,641	£ 729,582	5.63%

9.3.2 To make Precept 2023-24 recommendation to full Council

Members noted that the tax base for 2023 was yet to be advised by SDC, so it could only assume the current 2022 level (3,819.62) when looking at calculations for the Precept and Band D property increase.

Members noted, to balance the budget for 2023-24 a precept income of £677,868, would be needed. Members unanimously.

Resolved: to recommend to full Council to increase the Precept sufficiently to ensure a balanced budget. The increase in the Precept income would need to be £21,504/ 3.28% of the 2022-23 precept income.

10. FINANCE CORRESPONDENCE - None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 23 January 2023

Meeting closed at 20.15