



**MINUTES
FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Date: Tuesday 5 December 2023

Time: 6.30pm

Location: Chigwell Council Parish Offices, Hainault Road, Chigwell, IG7 6QZ

Members present:

Cllr Celina Jefcoate (Chair)

Cllr Rashni Chahal Holden

Cllr Elliot Costa

Cllr Faiza Rizvi

Members of the public:

One #

For part of the meeting

Members of the Public and Councillors were asked to note that in accordance with Standing Orders 3 (i) and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, photographing, recording, broadcasting, transmitting or otherwise reporting the proceeding of a meeting may take place.

Councillors were asked to note that in the exercise of their functions, they must take note of the following: equal opportunities; crime and disorder; human rights; health and safety and biodiversity

FG99/23 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and **ACCEPTED** from Cllr Tes Gaffar

FG100/23 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

FG101/23 - MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held 7 November 2023 were **APPROVED**

FG102/23 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

FG103/23 - FINANCE/ACTING PROPER OFFICER'S REPORT

The FO highlighted the payroll production by the appointed third party. It was **AGREED** a review was due.

Action: FO to present review and options re: supply to F&G

FG104/23 - FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

The bank payments for December 2023 were **APPROVED**

It was noted the rental agreements for cemetery vehicles would not continue beyond the authorised period and the condition report of the RTV would be considered by F&G at the next meeting.

Action: Staff to provide a comprehensive needs analysis and purchase/lease/short term rental options for any proposed additional/replacement vehicle(s) to the existing RTV

The card payments for October and November 2023 were **APPROVED**

It was **AGREED** that authority to approve overtime plus salary, superannuation and tax payments for November 2023 (payment due from 11 Dec) was delegated to two Councillors to perform outside the meeting

FG105/23 - BANK RECONCILIATIONS

The bank reconciliations to 30 November for all available accounts were **APPROVED**

FG106/23 - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE Q1 and Q2

The summary report for Q1 and Q2 of income, expenditure and costs to date plus a cashflow forecast and position against budget were **NOTED**

The presented virements were **AGREED**

FG107/23 - BANKING

All paperwork submitted to banks and the process of updating the mandates continues

FG108/23 - VACANCY UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Under S85 of the Local Government Act, Councillor Pranav Bhanot has ceased to be a member by reason of failure to attend meetings in a six month period. It was **AGREED** the Finance Officer and the Clerk would take any necessary actions.

Action: Clerk/FO asap to formally notify Cllr Bhanot and EFDC Electoral Services that Cllr Bhanot was no longer a member of Chigwell Parish Council and to update website,

Microsoft Office, bank mandates, key holder list, etc. To report to F&G at next meeting on progress.

FG109/23 - FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE INCIDENT LOG

No incidents were reported. The forensic audit is ongoing

Action: The FO to ask the auditor for an estimated delivery date.

FG110/23 - FOI/SAR/COMPLAINTS

The correspondence was reviewed and it was **AGREED** the Clerk would respond on behalf of the Council

FG111/23 - DRAFT BUDGET

The one and three year forecasts to date were reviewed. The FO reported that she was continuing to work with staff and Councillors to finalise requirements for 2024/25 budget but progress had been slowed by absences due to illness. It was **AGREED** the final budgets would be presented at the F&G meeting of 9 January

FG112/23 - ASSET REGISTER

The updating of the asset register continues. It was **AGREED** that a consultation with residents would be carried out regarding available options to dispose of the two buses owned by the Council. It was **AGREED** the Council would subscribe to Survey Monkey software to enable this and other regular consultations to be carried out

FG113/23 - PROCUREMENT POLICY

Amends to the draft were suggested

Action: Final draft to be prepared for the next F&G meeting

FG114/23 - INVESTMENT

Funds were in the process of being moved to higher interest current and savings accounts as per Council resolutions.

FG115/23 - MAST RENTAL/VAT POSITION

It was **AGREED** Cllr Chahal Holden on behalf of F&G, would establish with EFDC the terms of the transfer agreement of June 2016 and ensure all permissions were in place before any lease agreement was entered into for the land at Victory Hall

Interest in purchasing the freehold of the land on which the phone mast stands on Station Green had been expressed by the agent managing the site on behalf of the existing phone provider. It was **AGREED** the Finance Officer on behalf of F&G, would investigate

any permissions required before any consideration could be given to whether to progress to a proposal

Action: Cllr Chahal Holden and FO to process as above, including Clerk and F&G on all correspondence.

FG116/23 - TENDER DOCUMENT

It was **AGREED** the Tender would be published asap by the Clerk on Contract Finder with bids closing on 3 Jan. The decision would be made by Full Council between 11-18 January. The window to complete the works, including implementing permissions to work on protected trees, would be extended to include the month of October 2024 in addition to January-March 2024 if safety permitted.

Action: Chair of F&G to provide word version of Tender to Clerk/FO for amendment and submission. Notice of Tender/link also to be placed on website and widely circulated as appropriate

FG117/23 - MANAGEMENT CONTROL

Risk Assessments

Action: To receive an update from staff regarding risk assessments. To receive copies of internal playground weekly inspections from July to date, internal weekly and monthly inspection records of adult fitness equipment from April 2023 to date. To receive July 2023 ARD quarterly inspection and most recent Outdoor Fitness quarterly report. (Appendix 16).

Deferred due to information not tabled for the Committee

Licensing of Parish Premises

The PRL licence for Victory Hall was confirmed.

Hazardous/Flammable goods transport and storage

The available information was reviewed and the requests by various parties (including auditor, CCWAG for carbon audit, FO for budget planning) was noted.

Action: Staff to assist in ensuring Council provides all required information is readily available to those who request it. It was noted the use of agricultural diesel had previously been limited to the JCB digger and the mower and had stopped from October 2023 as per revised HMRC regulations. Crown Oil had been asked to cost for removing approx remaining 500-600L of agricultural diesel and clean the tank. Staff awaiting written cost.

FG118/23 - INTERNAL CONTROLS

The sign offs for Q3, Q4 and Q1 and Q2 are in progress

FG119/23 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD OR FOR DISCUSSION WITH NO DECISION

FG120/23 - DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 9 January

FG121/23 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The following motion proposed by the Chair was **AGREED**:

“That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed.”

FG122/23 - LEGAL CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence was reviewed and it was **AGREED** instruction to resolve should be given and. It was **AGREED** Councillor Costa would investigate, progress the matter with provider and report to the Clerk, FO and members throughout.

Action: the above to be actioned asap given possible time restraints. FO to review legal fees budget and advise of any necessary virements. Progress report from Cllr Costa and Clerk/FO for next F&G meeting

FG123/23 - PENSION POLICY

The update on the current pension position and correspondence received from the provider was reviewed and it was **AGREED** the Chair of F&G would refer aspects to EFDC for their input and update at the next F&G meeting

The meeting closed at 8.36pm