

PATCHWAY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance committee meeting held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 19:00 at Callicroft House, Patchway.

Councillors: S Scott (Chairman), P Cottrell, E Gordon and J James.

In attendance: Cllr R Loveridge, Cllr P Knight, Cllr T Scott, Derek Kemp (DCK Accounting), J Turner (Locum Clerk) and J Watkins (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO)

Members of the Public: None.

Absent: None.

As the time was 19:00, the Chair, Cllr S Scott called the meeting to order and informed all participants that the meeting would be recorded in line with The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014 (SI2014/2095) and Patchway Town Council's protocol on the filming and recording of Town Council, Committee and Sub- Committee meetings.

Prior to any business being transacted, the Chairman spoke a few words about Freeman of Patchway and previous Chairman/Mayor of the Town Council, Lewis Gray, who sadly passed away recently. Everyone present observed a one minutes silence in respect to Lewis Gray.

12/12/2023-No 1. To receive questions from the members of the public present, with respect to business on the agenda in accordance with Standing Order 4E.

None received.

12/12/2023-No 2. To receive any apologies for absence.

The committee noted apologies from Cllr Dayley Lawrence (Meeting clash) and Cllr Natalie Field (Meeting clash)

12/12/2023-No 3. To receive any declarations of interest and to consider any requests for dispensations for this meeting.

Any member having a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed should declare it during the meeting as specified in the Code of Conduct required by the Localism Act 2011 Section 27 and should leave the room while the matter was discussed.


12/12/2023-No 4. To approve the minutes of the Finance committee on Tuesday 3rd October 2023.

RESOLVED: It was agreed by a majority with one abstention to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record.

12/12/2023-No 5. To receive a presentation from Derek Kemp of DCK Accounting regarding Patchway Town Council's budget proposal# for the financial year 2024-2025.

The Chairman welcomed Derek Kemp to the meeting. Derek presented the iteration of the budget that has been worked on across all committees and has been scrutinised in detail by officers as well as Derek Kemp. Overall, the current proposed budget for the 2024-2025 financial year would see a small decrease in the precept based on a Band D average, even with a further reduction in the Council Tax Base. The budget also delivers on the aims and objectives of the Council as well as protecting Town Council services for the residents.

Derek Kemp highlighted the importance of the budget and the level of general reserves over the current financial year and looking forward to the next financial year. Derek shared the positive projected positions for the end of the financial year 2023-2024 and this will form part of the general reserves for the 2024/2025 financial year. The proposed budget depends on the capital provision that the Council wishes to have. The proposed limit in the 2024-2025 financial documents, is £50,000 whereas the Locum Clerk was proposing a capital provision of £11,500. Both options will lead to a small decrease as noted above in the average Band D Precept.

 9/1/24

Cllr P Cottrell raised a question on the amount of borrowing that Patchway Town Council has and Derek Kemp replied stating that value for those loans are seen in the new facilities around the Town, with the loans ending between 2026 – 2028, which will see a longer term decrease in the budget for PWLB loans.

Cllr E Gordon raised a question on the level of Capital Provision and Derek Kemp stated it was sufficient for a Town Council of the size of Patchway. If the Council wishes to raise the Capital Provision it could be done through increasing the precept or waiting to see if the year end results, beat the projections, for the 2023/2024 financial year.

Cllr J James raised a question on the PWLB interest and payments, which was clarified by Derek Kemp who stated that these are split out amongst the different loans to make it easier for Councillors to see the detail.

Cllr E Gordon raised a question on the application of grants and the Chairman confirmed that this should not be included as part of the budget as they are not guaranteed, which was further confirmed by Derek Kemp, who spoke on matched funding which could be taken from the capital provision.

Cllr E Gordon raised a question over earmarking funds for Town Council projects in the future and the Chairman confirmed that the current budget does not include any major projects for the near future due to the completion of large projects over the previous three years. Derek Kemp also confirmed this and clarified the need for a capital provision, to allow the Councillors to decide on any future projects and being able to afford those projects.

The Chairman confirmed that the Town Council will have at least three months of revenue expenditure equivalent as well as the capital provision as shown on the budget document.

Cllr R Loveridge asked a question about utilities and the cost of standing charges and gas and how this would impact the Town Council. This could be revised at a future date.

Cllr R Loveridge asked a question about the maintenance of the Jason Franklin 3G Facility and whether funds could be put away to be able to replace the surface as and when needed. Derek Kemp confirmed that there would be sufficient funding, based on £2000 per annum for a 10-year period, in the capital provision which can be used for that facility. These funds would need to be earmarked at each year end and the rolling capital provision of £50,000 should be renewed in each budget from now on for any unforeseen expenditure or projects. Derek Kemp proposed looking at the end of year positions of maintenance on all cost centres and suggested rolling any underspends into a 'General Maintenance' budget at the year end to enable the Council to save over a number of years.

Cllr R Loveridge asked a question about the budget setting documents and whether it would be possible to have a version that is easier to read. The officers will investigate along with Derek Kemp other reports that are available from the accounting package.

The committee thanked Derek Kemp for attending the meeting and wished him well for the future.

RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed that the budget documents would now be sent around to all Councillors for comment via email by 30th December 2023, prior to the Finance Committee meeting in January 2024.

12/12/2023 -No 6. To note that the meeting dates of the Finance Committee 2023 – 2024 will be held on:

Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 7.00pm

Tuesday 9th April 2024 at 7.00pm

The Committee noted the meeting dates of the Finance Committee.

The meeting was closed at 19:31.

