



Garstang Town Council

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Finance Committee Meeting, 9th January 2024 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance and Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on 9 January 2024, 7.30pm.

Present

Chairman: Councillor Atkinson
Councillors present: Atkinson, Allan
Councillors Pearson and Halford (ex-officio members)

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry and one member of the public.

Councillor Dyer resigned from the Council on 8/01/2024.

030(2023-24) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Rogers

031(2023-24) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

035(2023-24) Councillor Allan declared an 'other interest'. He is the Treasurer of the Garstang & District Heritage Society.

032(2023-24) Public Participation

The member of the public did not wish to speak.

033(2023-24) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 31 October 2023

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 31/10/2023 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 31/10/2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

Councillor Halford arrived.

034(2023-24) Receipts and payments account year 2023/24 (Q3)

A question was asked about code 21 training budget, would this code need to be reviewed in light of the Lengthsman's resignation? Would a higher budget figure be required for to allow for extra training for a new employee? It was agreed that this would be discussed under the budget heading.

Resolved: The Committee approved Q3 receipts and payment and the Chair signed a copy of the approved bank reconciliation at 31 December 2023.

035(2023-24) Budget 2024/25, RFO and Councillor Atkinson

The Committee noted the last Minute reference 167(2023-24), 20 November 2023 and the 4 updates since the last Full Council meeting on 20/11/2023:

- i) The tax base figures have been received from Wyre Council.
- ii) A meeting was held with a town resident on 19/12/2023.
- iii) The resignation of the Lengthsman which will take effect from 1/03/ 2024.
- iv) That the Chair, Councillor Atkinson, has carried out an informal email consultation to 3 Councillors who are involved in the following projects - Allotments, GGPB, Community Hall, Garstang Waves, Remembrance Sunday and Cherestanc Square.

Councillors discussed and worked through V0.3 budget paper prepared by the RFO. The summary of responses are detailed below:

Consideration	Reduce/Increase (£)	New budget figure (£)
Proposed precept from Full Council 20/11/2023	151,206.56	
Code 63 Allotments	-2,000.00	1,000.00 (£500 for site clearance - skips and £500 for tenancy agreements)
Code 45 Remembrance Sunday	-607.68	750.00
Code 66 Cherestanc Square	-7,000.00	0.00 The Committee noted Cllr Webster's (project leader) proposal for Full Council on 15/1 to remove the financial budget figure). Cllr Allan wished it to be noted in the minutes that he was disappointed his views had not been sought for the Full Council proposal; he is a member of the project team. If the Council were to acquire the Square in 2024/25, external funding would need to be sought to manage the asset.
Code 64 Community Hall	-4,500.00	500.00 (costs for consultation)
	-14,107.68	
Code 21 Training	225.92	500.00 (increase due to possible recruitment of new Lengthsman)
Code 32 Lengthsman Assets	1,000.00	1,551.28 (increase due to possible recruitment of new Lengthsman)
New code 68 Staff contingency	1,000.00	1,000.00 (increase to cover potential unplanned leave, recruitment fees etc)
	2,225.92	
Proposed recommendation from Finance Committee 9/1/2024	-11,881.76	
Proposed precept from Finance Committee 9/1/2024	139,324.80	

Resolved: The recommendations from the Finance Committee, to be considered at Full Council, on 15/01/2024 are as follows:

- a) That Full Council approve the revised V0.4 Budget 2024/25 based on the above amendments.
- b) That Full Council approve a precept for 2024/25 of £139,325. This is a Band D equivalent of £71.26 (an increase of £10.63 [equates to 17.53%] in comparison to last year's Band D equivalent), summarised in the table below:

	2023/24	2024/25
Precept	£114,188	£139,325
Tax base	1,883.41	1,955.04
Band D Equivalent	£60.63	£71.26
Change on Previous Year	£7.84	£10.63 (an extra 20 pence/week)
% Change on Previous Year	14.85%	17.53%

- c) That EMR Greater Garstang Partnership Board (GGPB) that currently has £4,375.61 in reserves is split and that a new EMR is created titled New Community Investment.
That the EMR GGPB is reduced to £375.61 and £4,000 be transferred into the new EMR New Community Investment. The new EMR will cover community assets (not just a community hall).
- d) That the 2024/25 precept and budget be communicated to the public by the following means; the Town Council website and Facebook platforms, the library notice board and the Focus magazine.
- e) That the RFO seeks advice from Scribe (Accounts software) about undertaking a 3-year budget, as per Financial Regulations 3.1

036(2023-24) Risk Register, quarterly review

Minute 09(2023-24) Risk Register, quarterly review is outstanding

Resolved: That the Chair of Finance Committee, Councillor Rogers and the RFO sit together and review the risk register and what can be done to improve it.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that the resolution [Minute 09(2023-24)]still stood.

037(2023-24) Asset Register

The RFO reported that the Asset register had now been uploaded into Scribe. Councillors were asked to approve the asset register to 31 December 2023.

Resolved: The Committee approved the Asset register to 31 December 2023.

038(2023-24) Amenities, Moss Lane playing field trampoline

The Committee considered the correspondence provided by Wyre Council.

Resolved: The Committee resolved not to pursue the works which had been suggested by Kompan.

039(2023-24) Kepple Lane Park Annual Maintenance 2024, RFO

The Committee discussed the task of Kepple Lane Park Annual Maintenance for 2024.

Resolved: That the Finance Committee recommends to Full Council that the above maintenance requirement is delegated to the RFO in consultation with the Chair of Finance and the Mayor.

Any suspension of financial regulations, if required, will be retrospectively reported to February's Town Council meeting.

040(2023-24) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information.

The member of the public left the meeting.

041(2023-24) Scout & Guide Hut tenancy agreement, RFO

The Committee discussed the Scout & Guide Hut tenancy agreement.

Resolved: The Committee responded that the car park is not covered in the tenancy agreement (reference 1.2 in the lease). The Town Council will review the question that has been asked about a change to the tenancy agreement and the findings will be reported back to the Finance Committee on 23/04/2024.

042(2023-24) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Re-admission of the Press and Public

To resolve that the confidential business having been concluded, the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

043(2023-24) Lancashire County Pension Fund Annual Report 2022/23

The Committee note the [Lancashire County Pension Fund Annual Report](#)

044(2023-24) Date of next meeting

23 April 2024.