



Garstang Town Council

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Finance Committee Meeting, 29th October 2024 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance & Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on Tuesday 29th October 2024, 7.00pm.

Present

Chairman: Councillor Atkinson

Councillors present: Allan, Atkinson, Brooks, Keyes and Pearson

Councillor Halford (ex-officio member)

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry.

028(2024-25) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Webster (ex-officio member).

029(2024-25) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

There were no Declarations of Interest declared or requests for dispensations.

030(2024-25) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

031(2024-25) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 8 October 2024

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 8 October 2024 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 8 October 2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

032(2024-25) Budget 2025/26, RFO and Councillor Atkinson

Background: minute reference 167(2023-24), 21 October 2024

Resolved: Full Council accepted the recommendations of the Finance Committee as detailed in the Appendix and approved the draft budget V0.2. The Council made no further recommendations for the Finance Committee to consider at their meeting on 29/10/2024.

The shortfall precept figure amounted to £137,151.00 (Receipts £13,939.00, Payments 151,090.00).

Committee members had been provided with the following reports:

- i) Summary Forecast report 2024/25 and monthly summary forecast report at 23/10/2024.
- ii) V0.3 Draft budget 2025/26. [The difference between V0.2 (approved by Full Council 21/10/2024) and V0.3 is that payments up to 23/10/2024 are included].

- iii) Budget notes
- iv) Current EMR balances

The RFO provided an update.

- i) since the publication of the agenda the Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2024/25 had been announced (23/10/24).
- ii) The RFO had sought the forecast figures for 2024/25 from T+G (payroll provider). These figures have been shared with the Chair of Finance.
- iii) The RFO will be entering the forecast figures onto Scribe after the meeting and, in consultation with the Chair of Finance, reviewing the 2025/26 salaries (in light of the 2024/25 pay award) all in readiness for the publication of the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 18/11/24.

The Committee was asked to review/ recommend the following:

- a) Approve the Earmarked Reserves notes prepared by Councillor Atkinson and reviewed by the RFO, detailed in the Appendix. The update, if approved, will be published on the website to accompany the Reserves balances. It is hoped that the published notes will provide more detail behind the title of the reserve; to allow residents, of the town, to have a better understanding of what projects the monies are being saved for.
- b) Approve any further changes to Earmarked Reserves balances
- c) Review the budget 2024/2025. (V0.3), for it to be considered by Full Council on 18 November 2024.

Councillor Pearson asked if there was enough monies in the budget to purchase a new mower for this financial year (2024-25) and subsequent tools in 2025-26? The RFO responded that at cost code 32 there was £1,551 in the budget to spend this year and an EMR Lengthsman Assets of £961.60. For 2025-26 there was a budget figure of £1,613. The Committee agreed there was enough monies allocated in the budget line 32 and EMR Lengthsman Assets.

Resolved:

The Committee:

- a) Approved the Earmarked Reserves notes detailed in the Appendix (subject to the deletion of a repetitive sentence under the Remembrance Sunday heading). The update is to be published on the website to accompany the Reserves balances. It is hoped that the published notes will provide more detail behind the title of the reserve; to allow council members, staff, and the public to better understand the purpose of each reserve and its current status.
- b) The Committee approved no further changes to the Earmarked Reserves balances.
- c) The Committee resolved that the RFO enters the forecast figures onto Scribe after the meeting and, in consultation with the Chair of Finance, reviews the 2025/26 salaries (in light of the 2024/25 pay award) all in readiness for the publication of the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 18/11/24. The Committee **further resolved** to approve the budget

(with the above amendment at staff salaries) 2024/2025 (V0.3) for it to be considered by Full Council on 18 November 2024. The revised copy to be titled **2025/2026 (V0.4)**.

033(2024-25) Date of next meeting

28 January 2025.

The meeting finished at: 7.28pm

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Appendix

Earmarked Reserves Notes

Name	Notes
Queen's Platinum Jubilee	Close
Kepple Lane playing field	Scope: - Maintenance costs for the full playing field and car park. - Replacement of existing play equipment and assets.
Legal & Consultancy contingency	Scope: - Unforeseen legal costs incurred within the financial year for council projects and operations.
Amenities	Scope: - Maintenance costs for council amenities, such as tree works and general minor enhancements. - Maintenance and renovation costs for the Pat Seed Garden and Lengthsmans container.
Reserves	Scope: - General reserves and election reserves as per the Reserves Policy. - To mitigate the council's potential risks (as per the risk register).
Civic Mayor boards	Scope: - Reserves in anticipation for additional mayoral boards, reserved in readiness for a location identified for the boards to be displayed.
Young Mayor charity monies	Close
IT maintenance	Scope: - Maintenance and replacement of IT devices for council staff.
War Memorial	Scope: - Maintenance costs for the war memorial. - Replacement of existing assets.
Moss Lane playing field	Scope: - Maintenance costs for the full playing field. - Replacement of existing play equipment and assets.
Annual Town Meeting & Awards	Scope: - Reserves for additional or changes to the trophies. - Costs associated with running the ATM.
Youth Council funds	Close
Community Engagement	Scope: - Costs associated with undertaking community consultation and supporting community partnerships. - Reserves for commemorative community events (e.g. VE day) and national events (e.g. Jubilee celebrations).
Emergency Plan	Close
Heritage banners	Close

Name	Notes
Greater Garstang Partnership Board	Scope: - Minimal running costs associated the GGPB.
New Community Investment	Scope: - Reserves to generate a fund for new capital investment for the benefit of the community. - Including expanding existing amenities sites, major asset enhancement, strategic asset acquisition (including but not limited to a community hall) and delivery of the council's strategic plan for the benefit of the local community. Resolutions: - 15 January 2024,207(2023-24) Precept/Budget 2024/2025 b iii) - 9 January 2024 Finance Committee 035(2023-24) The new EMR will cover community assets (not just a community hall).
Health and safety	Scope: - Ad hoc costs to ensure the town councils compliance with HSE requirements. Resolutions: - 20/11/2023 Full Council 167(2023-24) Precept/Budget 2024/2025 Code 23 H& S Move into an EMR if not spent 1/4/24 any underspend move into an EMR if not spent.
Lengthsman Assets	Scope: - Reserves to fund capital investment in additional/replacement assets for the lengthsman. Resolutions: - 20/11/2023 Full Council 167(2023-24) Precept/Budget 2024/2025 Codes 31 & 32 If don't spend monies by end 2024 transfer any surplus monies into one EMR titled Lengthsman Assets.
Tree surveys	Scope: - Reserves to fund tree surveys on a bi-annual basis. Resolutions: - 20/11/2023 Full Council 167(2023-24) Precept/Budget 2024/2025 Code 38 Any underspend by end 2024 transfer to a new EMR Any underspend by end 2024 transfer to a new EMR.
Remembrance Sunday	Scope: - Recurring event running costs and reserves to fund potential risk (such as road closure costs). Resolutions: - 20/11/2023 Full Council 167(2023-24) Precept/Budget 2024/2025 45 Remembrance Sunday Any underspend by end 2024 transfer to a new EMR.
Allotments	Scope: - Costs associated with the capital costs for the renovation of the allotments. - Minor maintenance costs. Resolutions: - As per approved budget 15/1/2024

Name	Notes
Community Hall	Scope: - Costs for scoping out and consulting on potential options for a community hall. Resolutions: - As per approved budget 15/1/2024
Drainage on Moss Lane Park	Scope: - Costs associated with the capital project costs to improve the drainage on the MLP football pitch. Resolutions: - As per approved budget 15/1/2024
Staff Contingency	Scope: - Costs associated with temporary staff to cover absence, overtime, recruitment, unexpected allowances and unforeseen increases. Resolutions: - As per approved budget 15/1/2024

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