



Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at River Bourne Community Farm

MINUTES

Councillors present: Baker (Chair), McDonald, Waller

In attendance: Deane (Clerk), Prince (Responsible Financial Officer RFO)

The meeting commenced at 7.08pm.

FGP.23.057 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Schneider.

FGP.23.058 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

FGP.23.059 Approval of Minutes

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2023

FGP.23.060 Matters Arising

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council response to the Wiltshire Draft Local Plan had been submitted. The Clerk reported that she was talking to consultants regarding a review of the Neighbourhood Plan which could be funded by a grant from Locality. The Strategic Plan review will be included on the Full Council agenda for December.

FGP.23.061 Review of Investment Strategy

The RFO recommended no changes to the current investment strategy. The Chair asked if the Multi Asset Fund from CCLA was now available to Parish Councils. The RFO stated that he would not currently recommend investment in such a fund, and that it would require a full investigation by an independent financial advisor in line with CCLA guidance. The Clerk reported it appeared currently the minimum investment for the fund is £1million which does not meet the Parish Councils requirement for investment at this stage. The committee agreed no changes were required to the current strategy and the review was noted.

FGP.23.062 Budget 2024/2025

The RFO had circulated Report 23.062 in advance of the meeting, with a draft budget for 2024/25, including requested funds from Operations, Communications and Personnel Committees, resulting in a possible increase in precept of 17.42%, or £88.74 per annum for Band D. Cllr Waller noted the proposed budget would result in approximately £1 per month increase at Band D. The RFO noted that average of Wiltshire Parish Councils with a tax base over 2500 was £197 in 2023/24. Councillors discussed ways to reduce this increase to reduce the burden on taxpayers, including the use of Community Infrastructure Levy to fund

some planned works. The committee agreed to recommend the use of £25,000 CIL funds to support planned works in order to reduce the precept requirement.

The committee requested that the RFO increase the budget for Equipment inc IT to £2500 to include a possible laptop purchase, and replacement printer.

The committee agreed that the proposals to budget £10,000 for Community Building support and to increase the grant budget to £10,000 in line with current awards, were appropriate.

The committee requested that £250 be added to the budget for a Chairmans Allowance.

FGP.23.063 Officers Report and Correspondence

The Clerk reported that investigations were being made regarding ownership of a dilapidated bus shelter at Broken Cross.

FGP.23.064 Draft Agenda Full Council Meeting 18th December 2023

Agenda items for Decembers meeting were agreed. It was agreed that subject to agreeing the 2024/25 Budget in the December meeting, the following Full Council meeting would be Monday 15th January 2024. If changes to the budget and precept figures were required following the December meeting, an extra meeting would be called for Monday 8th January 2024. The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be in February 2024.

FGP.23.065 Exempt Business –Matters in Confidence

There was no exempt business.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 at the River Bourne Community Farm.

SIGNED:

DATE: