

# Amersham Town Council

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Pinkney (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Councillor E Shepherd (Town Mayor)  
Councillor M Roberts  
Councillor J Barnes  
Councillor A Lamont  
Councillor H Maitland-Jones  
Councillor P Milliner

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs E Richardson - Town Clerk Finance & Policy  
Mr S Catanach – Town Clerk Community Services & Engagement

23. **APOLOGIES:** Councillor M Dormer  
Councillor M Flys  
Councillor Mrs V Head

24. **OPEN SESSION:**  
The Committee received a presentation from a local group, Sewa Day, regarding their expression of interest in installing an open-air volleyball court on King George V Playing field. The group was asked to return with further information about the likely cost of the installation and ideas on future management.

25. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
There were no declarations of interest.

26. **TO RECEIVE THE FINANCE REPORTS FOR JULY & AUGUST 2023:**

- i) Income and Expenditure Reports for periods ending 31 July & 31 August 2023
- ii) Balance sheets as at 31 July and 31 August 2023
- iii) Accounts paid from 1 July to 31 August 2023

It was Proposed - Councillor P Milliner  
Seconded – Councillor M Roberts

RECOMMENDED that the finance reports for the period 1 July to 31 August 2023 be accepted.

27. **APPROVAL OF GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**  
The recommendation of the Grants Sub-Committee for allocation of the grants was tabled. After discussion, it was agreed that the £200 balance of the fund being held for the Chesham Christmas Party for the Elderly would be re-allocated to the Chiltern Girls Cluster Cricket Team, since Members questioned the justification for contributing to the Christmas Party, given so few Amersham residents attended the event last year. The Grants allocation will be ratified at the Full Council meeting in November.

28. **TO DISCUSS SEWA DAY'S PRESENTATION FOR VOLLEYBALL COURT:**

As noted during the Open Session of the meeting, the Sewa Day group had been asked to provide further information on the costs associated with the installation of a volleyball court. It was felt that a court purely for volleyball would be too restrictive and a multi-use court would be more practical and could prove very popular, though the management of the facility and maintenance costs would require thorough investigation.

29. **MARKET HALL USAGE:**

The Clerk's report on the use of Market Hall by one of the regular hirers was discussed. It was unanimously agreed that the weekend art classes should not be resumed once the internal renovation of the hall has been completed by the Depot Team, owing to the damage caused by paint splatters throughout the hall from the children's art activities.

It was  
Proposed – Councillor A Lamont  
Seconded – Councillor M Roberts

RECOMMENDED that the Clerk serve notice to the hirer for the classes to cease in December at the end of the Autumn Term.

30. **RENEWAL OF THE COUNCIL'S MAIN INSURANCE POLICY:**

It was noted that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a three year contract with the Council's existing insurer, with a 7.29% index-linked increase on the premium.

It was  
Proposed – Councillor D Pinkney  
Seconded – Councillor E Shepherd

RECOMMENDED that the renewal quotation of £23,199.80 be approved for payment.

31. **RENEWAL OF FLOOD INSURANCE FOR FLINT BARN COURT:**

It was noted that there was no increase in the premium for the Flint Barn flood insurance for 2023/24.

It was  
Proposed – Councillor J Barnes  
Seconded – Councillor P Milliner

RECOMMENDED that the Flint Barn flood insurance be renewed for 2023/24 at a cost of £1,339.61.

32. **MEMBERSHIP OF THE RURAL MARKET TOWNS GROUP:**

The Council had received an invitation to join the Rural Market Towns Group for a free 6 month period. After discussion

It was  
Proposed – Councillor M Roberts  
Seconded – Councillor E Shepherd

RECOMMENDED that the Council takes up the offer of the 6 month free trial membership, with a review to decide whether to continue with paid membership thereafter.

33. **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

The Clerk reported that the audit on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 had been completed by the external auditor and the accounts published.

**Part two**

**EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**That under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they include the likely disclosure of exempt information, stated to be confidential.**

**34. LEASE OF REAR GARDEN AREA OF 146/148 STATION ROAD:**

The Clerk's report regarding the potential lease of the rear garden of 146/148 Station Road by a nearby business had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion,

It was

Proposed - Councillor M Roberts

Seconded – Councillor P Milliner

RECOMMENDED that a counter-offer for a 5 year lease be proposed as follows:

Year 1 - rental of £2,500 plus the council's legal fees be paid by the tenant

Years 2-5 – rental of £3,000 per annum.

**35. UPDATE ON FLEXIBLE WORKING FOR MEMBER OF STAFF:**

The Clerk updated Councillors with the current situation on the member of staff's request for flexible working.

**36. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

Members were informed of an email from Buckinghamshire Council earlier in the day regarding proposed changes to Bucks Council's service provision based at King George V House. The Town Council's views were sought. The Clerk was asked to obtain more information prior to further discussion at the Council meeting on 27 November. Members voiced concern about the possible impact these changes may have on the town council office staff, with the likelihood of increased enquiries and visitors to the town council office.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman.....

Date .....