

# Amersham Town Council

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2023

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs E Richardson - Town Clerk Finance & Policy

37. **APOLOGIES:** Councillor Mrs V Head

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

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

- i) Income and Expenditure Reports for periods ending 30 September & 31 October 2023
- ii) Balance sheets as at 30 September and 31 October 2023
- iii) Accounts paid from 1 September to 31 October 2023

It was Proposed - Councillor H Maitland-Jones  
Seconded – Councillor E Shepherd

RECOMMENDED that the finance reports for the period 1 September to 31 October 2023 be accepted.

40. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS:**

The Financial Regulations had been reviewed by the Town Clerk, with no alterations being deemed necessary

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

AGREED that the Council's Financial Regulations be approved with no suggested changes.

41. **MINUTES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE:**  
The minutes of the Establishment Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 December to consider the current grading structure for all staff were considered. After brief discussion

It was Proposed – Councillor D Pinkney  
Seconded – Councillor J Barnes

AGREED that the recommendations of the Establishment sub-committee be approved, with actions implemented as proposed.

42. **TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2024/25 AND PRECEPT REQUEST:**  
The Town Clerk's reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that there was no change to the tax based advised by Buckinghamshire Council. It was also noted that the funding allocation from Buckinghamshire Council for the devolved services contract would not be confirmed until February, making the Town Council's budget calculations more complex, as the precept request would need to be submitted by the end of January. Options were considered on how best to minimize the precept increase for 2024/25, in order to lessen the burden on Amersham council tax payers. After discussion

It was Proposed – Councillor M Roberts  
Seconded – Councillor J Barnes

RECOMMENDED to propose an increase of approximately 7.44% (on a Band D equivalent property). This figure would be achieved by lowering the capital fund allocation from £100,000 to £70,000 and using the councils reserves to finance some of the planned capital projects. The budget and precept for 2024/25 will be agreed at the Council meeting on 22 January. In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to circulate the detailed budget figures to Councillors for further consideration. Councillors were asked to notify the Town Clerk ahead of the Council meeting scheduled for 22 January, if they have any suggestions for additional savings.

43. **REPLACEMENT DEPOT VANS:**  
The report from the Depot & Facilities Manager had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion

It was Proposed – Councillor M Flys  
Seconded – Councillor H Maitland-Jones

RECOMMENDED that the two depot vans which have now passed the end of their 5 year lease, be replaced on a 5 year hire purchase agreement as follows:

Tipper truck - £650 / month for 60 months  
Panel van - £500 / month for 60 months

44. **BIODIVERSITY POLICY:**  
It was noted that under the latest government guidance, parish and town councils should, under the 2021 Environment Act, consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity and agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration. Whilst

the council already continues to promote biodiversity through its Amersham in Bloom initiative

It was Proposed - Councillor E Shepherd  
Seconded - Councillor J Barnes

RECOMMENDED that the Community Services & Engagement Committee draw up a policy, together with appropriate objectives for formal adoption by Council.

45. **MARKET HALL- REQUEST FROM THE AMERSHAM SOCIETY FOR FURTHER FUNDING TOWARDS SURVEYS:**

The Amersham Society had asked the council to consider funding towards a survey of Market Hall to assess the structural and historical significance, as well as a public survey to research possible future uses for the hall (total cost of both surveys approx.£7k - £10k). After consideration and noting the cost of the recent and continuing improvements to the hall would exceed £150,000

It was Proposed – Councillor M Roberts  
Seconded – Councillor H Maitland-Jones

RECOMMENDED that further funding provision for these surveys could not be justified at the present time.

46. **SECONDARY GLAZING FOR MARKET HALL AND FLINT BARN COURT:**

As part of the council’s green objectives, quotations had been sought for secondary glazing at Market Hall and Flint Barn Court, to conserve energy and reduce the carbon footprint. After consideration

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

RECOMMENDED that quotations first be obtained for adjustment to the existing windows at Flint Barn Court to improve their fit before deciding on secondary glazing and to defer a decision on secondary glazing at Market Hall, until the final budget figures for 2024/25 are known.

47. **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

a) Update from Buckinghamshire Council on King George V House, Amersham

The email from Buckinghamshire Council on the phasing out and ultimate closure of the Bucks Council offices at King George V House was noted.

b) The Platt access road

An email had been received from a resident of The Platt requesting funding towards re-surfacing of the private road. As the email had arrived on the day of the meeting, the content was noted and a response will be formally agreed at the next Council meeting.

**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.**

48. **UPDATE ON THE LEASE OF THE REAR GARDEN OF 146/148 STATION ROAD:**

The Clerk informed Councillors that the terms of the lease for the rear garden had been agreed with the prospective tenant and that the ATC solicitor was preparing a lease.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman.....

Date.....

