

Amersham Town Council

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor D Pinkney (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor M Roberts
Councillor J Barnes
Councillor M Flys
Councillor Mrs V Head
Councillor A Lamont
Councillor H Maitland-Jones

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

49. **APOLOGIES:** Councillor E Shepherd (Town Mayor)
Councillor M Dormer

50. **ABSENT:** Councillor P Milliner

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

52. **TO RECEIVE THE FINANCE REPORTS FOR NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2023:**

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

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

RECOMMENDED that the finance reports for the period 1 November to 31 December 2023 be accepted.

53. **MARKET HALL – REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE AMERSHAM SOCIETY:**

The Committee discussed two emails received from the Chair of the Amersham Society, Edward Copisarow, concerning the society's request for funding towards two surveys. These would include a historical survey of the building, as well as a survey of local

voluntary groups, to identify those who may be interested in using the hall in the future if changes were made to the hall. After discussion

It was Proposed – Councillor M Roberts
Seconded – Councillor M Flys

AGREED that in accordance with Standing Orders, the previous decision made by the Finance Committee in December regarding potential funding could not be reviewed until June, under the ‘6 month rule’. As such, the committee agreed to review this decision in June by which time the Society may have more concrete information about potential third party funding for the surveys.

54. **TREE WORKS AT ATC SITES:**

A report from Steve Catanach had been circulated prior to the meeting regarding the necessity for tree works at Barn Meadow, Hervines Park, Rectory Woods and at the Woodside Road Allotments to fell dead and dying trees, which are in danger of falling. After brief discussion

It was Proposed – Councillor D Pinkney
Seconded – Councillor A Lamont

AGREED that the tree works proceed as planned with the recommended arboriculturist at a total cost of £18,615 +VAT.

55. **ENERGY SUPPLY CONTRACT RENEWAL:**

The Clerk’s report regarding renewal of the Council’s energy supply (electricity & gas) had been circulated prior to the meeting. Based on the anticipated fluctuation of energy costs and mindful of the savings to be made compared to the current contracts,

It was Proposed – Councillor J Barnes
Seconded – Councillor H Maitland-Jones

AGREED that the contracts be renewed as recommended by the Council’s broker from January 2025 to December 2026 with Yorkshire Gas & Power for electricity supply and YU Energy for gas. It was noted that both supplies are from renewable sources.

56. **WESTWOOD LODGE – REPLACEMENT FLOORING:**

The Town Clerk’s report had been circulated prior to the meeting. After brief discussion

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

AGREED that the flooring be renewed at the Lodge at a cost of £800 for supply of materials, with Mark Richardson undertaking the work.

57. **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

a) **Update on Market Hall renovation**

The Town Clerk reported on the progress with the renovation work in the hall currently being undertaken by the members of the ATC Depot Team. As well as internal redecoration, a new kitchen and new 1st floor toilets, the grant money had also been used to purchase infra-red heaters (as recommended in the carbon audit), which were proving much more efficient than the existing wall heaters. Replacement blinds and wall heaters had also been purchased with the grant money, with the old heaters being relocated to Barn Meadow Community Hall.

b) **Update on resurfacing of The Platt private access road**

Following agreement during the January Council meeting, at which Members agreed to contribute to the repair of The Platt access road, an email had been received from Mr Coates, confirming that he had been unable to secure agreement from other Platt residents to contribute to the total cost, so the proposed repair has been postponed, pending further discussion by residents.

c) **Signing of council payments**

The Clerk's comments regarding the procedure for signing ATC payments were noted.

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.

58. **ATC STAFFING MATTERS:**

The Clerk's report and the minutes of the recent Establishment Committee were noted. After discussion,

It was

Proposed – Councillor H Maitland-Jones
Seconded – Councillor A Lamont

AGREED that the recommendations of the Establishment Committee be implemented as follows:

- a) That the vacancy for Administration Officer (Community Services) be advertised internally.
- b) That David Del Rio's current 6 month fixed term contract be extended to December 2024 to cover the work at the depot.
- c) That Kelvin Welham's request for reduced hours be accepted and that his contract be revised from full time to 3 days per week from 1 April 2024.
- d) That a recruitment process is undertaken for a groundperson to replace the lost hours at the depot.

59. **LEASE OF REAR GARDEN AT 146/148 STATION ROAD**

The lease drawn up by the ATC solicitor for the rental of the rear garden of 146 and 148 Station Road had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion,

It was

Proposed – Councillor M Roberts
Seconded – Councillor M Flys

AGREED that responses to the solicitor's queries on certain clauses should be as follows:

- Clause 1(a) The Council will not require a rent review option during the 5 year lease.
- Clause 7.1 Agreed that the Council would require evidence that the tenant had secured public liability insurance in relation to the property.
- Clause 9.1(c) Agreed that the Council would like plans of any landscaping alterations, for prior approval of the work.
- Clause 17.1 Agreed that the council would like a mutual break clause exercisable by either party after two years, giving 3 months' notice.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Chairman.....

Date

