

# SAWBRIDGECWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

## FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 8:20pm on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

#### **Those present**

Cllr Eric Buckmaster  
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster  
Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt  
Cllr Reece Smith

#### **In attendance:**

Christopher Hunt - Town Clerk  
Cllr A Parsad-Wyatt

#### **F 23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr S Smith, Cllr G Rattey.  
*[prop Cllr R Buckmaster sec'd Cllr N Parsad-Wyatt]*

#### **F 23/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest by members

#### **F 23/26 MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 11th Jseptember 2023 (F02).

To attend to any matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.

- Motion postponed for further investigation into the water use and increased water charges from October 2023

The Clerk explained this price increase was due to a water leak which he had now repaired and he had also changed legionnaires testing which has assisted in reducing the water use.

| Actions  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Cllr E Buckmaster to circulate to forward the link to the rural bus funding stream | Completed                          |
| Councillor engagement update to include the results of the action plan engagement  | Completed and added to the agenda. |

*[prop Cllr N Parsad-Wyatt sec'd Cllr R Smith]*

#### **F 23/27 STAFF MATTERS**

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

The Clerk referred to his report highlighting a request to increase a member of staffs hours to assist in completing new projects linked to the Sawbobus and Allotments no questions were raised.

**F 23/28 FINANCE MATTERS**  
Budget 2023/24

To review the draft budget and Clerks report of the year 2023/24;

Clerk explained the implications of council financial reserves, and the standard of 25% to 33% required for the level of general reserve. Any budget deficit would be made up by drawing down from general reserve and that any surplus would be added to general reserve.

The draft budget was inspected through the various detailed headings and a number of questions were asked and a minor adjustment was made.

**Resolved:** To make a recommendation for adoption of the budget by Council

*[prop Cllr N Parsad-Wyatt; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]*

**F 23/29 JUBILEE GARDENS WORKING PARTY**

Update on the current project status, the clerk informed the members of that a meeting was planned with the working group and confirmation was being sought to submit planning applications for the project to progress.

**F23/30 COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT**

A meeting with Lower Sheering PC has been set to look at cross border engagement at events throughout the year.

**F23/31 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

To discuss proposals for promoting economic development in the town:  
No update available due to Cllr Rattey not in attendance..

**F23/32 POLICY MATTERS**

To consider any matters relating to policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

- To recommend approval of the Financial Regulations 2024 at Full Council 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**F23/33 INCOME and EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Clerks report for month nine of the 2023/24 financial year showing variances over £1000 and/or 10%. No questions were raised.

**F23/34 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Clerk highlighted he was exploring funding in relation to the new energy hub project and eco audit.

**F23/35 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

Cllr Buckmaster raised a request from Cllr A Furnace to focus on reducing the councils carbon footprint to zero by 2030. It was agreed that this should be considered after the results of the 3 acorns revisit or an up to date eco audit due to budget restraints for this forthcoming financial year.

Meeting Closed at 9:25pm