

PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station House, Padstow

Present: Councillors R Higman (Chairman), J O'Keefe (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Dawe, K Freeman, M Rickard and A Rees

In Attendance: Mrs N Barnes (Responsible Financial Officer) and Mrs S Daly (Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant RFO and Minute Taker)

- FGP2023/21 Apologies for absence and announcements:** Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs T Walter. There were no announcements.
- FGP2023/22 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
- FGP2023/23 Public Participation:** There was no public participation.
- FGP2023/24 Minutes Tuesday 18 July 2023: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 July 2023 were a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the chair.
- FGP2023/25 Committee Works i) Update:** was noted for information.
ii) Programme: was noted for information without amendment.
- FGP2023/26 Budget To Actual Variance Report 1.4.23-31.10.23:** The budget report, providing an overview of the total income and revenue expenditure from 1.4.23 – 31.10.23 and explanations for any significant variances, was noted.
- FGP2023/27 Budget Report 2023-24:** The report was noted for information. Comment was made that car parking income had held up, though generally income was slightly down in real terms and expenditure was up across the board. It was noted that this was a trend experienced by many businesses and organisations in the current economic climate.
- FGP2023/28 Budget Report 2024-25:**
Members' Allowances: Consideration was given to setting a member's allowance. It was noted that one had not previously been set.
- RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT** no members' allowances be set for 2024-25.

Grants: Members gave consideration to setting a provision of £35,000 for the Council's community grant scheme. It was noted that this was a decrease on the current year's

provision of £60,000 due to levelling off of income and increased costs, to provide a balanced budget. Members further noted that only £45,744 of this provision had been awarded and considered that many of this year's grant applications had been awarded for larger "one off" items which were unlikely to be applied for again. It was also noted that grants were discretionary and not to be relied upon. Comment was made that the Council's community event spending had increased and members were satisfied with reducing the grant allocation for 2024-25.

RESOLVED to agree the inclusion of £35,000 for grants within the draft Budget 2024-25.

Ear Marked Reserves (EMR): The Chairman outlined the Council's current earmarked reserves and noted that there were no recommendations from the HRT, Staffing or LTOS Committees to amend the Council's EMRs for 2024-25.

RESOLVED that Council's current earmarked reserves remain unchanged in the draft Budget 2024-25 being:

- i) Properties and Grounds Maintenance - £160,000
- ii) Vehicle and Machinery Replacement - £25,000
- iii) Investigating Options for Acquiring Cemetery Land
£50,000

Revenue Income and Expenditure: The Chairman referred members to the agenda report on this item and the appended draft Budget 2024-25 which members gave careful consideration to.

In considering the specific recommendations from the HRT, Staffing and LTOS Committees, members debated the merits of increasing only the 12hr, 24hr, coach, and season ticket parking tariffs. It was considered that the income generated would not be material and therefore not worth the cost and time to make these changes alone. Consideration was given to increasing other tariffs but it was generally felt that in the current economic climate, all tariffs should remain unchanged so as to avoid deterring visitors to Padstow. It was felt this would also show support to local businesses.

There was some discussion regarding car par enforcement and the need to set a provision for this should CC be able to increase their offering. Members were satisfied with the suggestion from the HRT committee.

Members were supportive of all recommendations from the Staffing and LTOS committees in relation to revenue income and expenditure.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendations of the HRT, Staffing and LTOS Committees in respect of revenue income and expenditure for inclusion within the draft Budget 2024-

25 with the exception of Car Park tariffs, recommending instead that these remain the same as for 2023-24.

Additional Provisions: Consideration was given to setting any additional provisions within the draft budget 2024-25, however members were satisfied with the provisions included.

RESOLVED to agree the revenue and expenditure provisions included in the draft Budget 2024-25, as detailed in the agenda pages.

General Reserves: Members noted the Council's General Reserve Policy, being to hold a minimum of one year's revenue expenditure in free reserves (the General Fund) and that this was reflected in the Draft Budget.

Capital Expenditure (Other operating and reserves): Members were support of the HRT and LTOS Committee recommendations for capital expenditure, noting that there were no recommendations of this kind from the Staffing Committee.

Further consideration was given to the proposed project to improve the Lawns garages and Scout Hut area and Committee concluded that the likely timescales involved in the project made it unlikely that the proposed budget of £200,000 would be spent in full in the year 2024-25. It was considered the the project could be progressed just as quickly with a provision of £50,000 in the 2024-25 budget and a provision of £150,000 in the business plan for 2025-26.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendations of the HRT and LTOS Committees in respect of capital expenditure for inclusion within the draft Budget 2024-25, subject to reducing the provision for the Lawns garages and Scout Hut area to £50,000 and setting a provision of £150,000 for this project in the Business Plan for 2025-26.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT the Draft Budget 2024-25, as detailed in the agenda pages but subject to the amendments in the previous resolutions, be approved.

Precept 2024-25: As a balanced budget had been set, it was not considered necessary to set a Precept for 2024-25.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT no Precept be set for 2024-25.

Business Plan: The Chairman referred Committee to the updated Business Plan for consideration which included £65,000 for Dock Wall Repairs in 2025/26 recommend by the

HRT Committee. Members were supported of the updated Plan.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT the updated Business Plan, as detailed in the agenda pages and subject to the amendment in the previous resolution in relation to the Lawns garages and Scout Hut area, be approved.

FGP2023/29

Future meetings: The date of the next meeting was noted, being Tuesday 20 February 2024 at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 7.25 pm.