

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting Held Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 6:30 PM

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr M Lock

Councillors : Cllr L Birchall, Cllr P Brougham, Cllr J Desmond, Cllr K Hughes, Cllr C Parker

Officers : D Healey, S Larking, A Mc Intyre

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr J Sayers, Cllr Jo Burns, Cllr P McCormack

2 Declarations of Interest

None received

3 Public Participation.

None notified

4 To Confirm the Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd March 2023 be approved as a correct record

5 Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements Year end

The Finance Officer gave a summary of the financial position for the 2022/23 financial year. While some budgets had overspent there was an overall underspend of £30,720.12. This includes a donation of £1,436.15 from a previous Mayor to be used for youth provision and £4,650 allocated to Vehicle and Machinery reserves for replacement vehicles. It was recommended that the balance of £24,633.97 be transferred to the Asset Maintenance budget to help meet costs of works to the fabric of the Town Hall. Money can be vired to meet emergencies e.g. new boilers earlier in the year. The Town Clerk reported that the money in the Section 106 (S106) budget was from the Poppy Fields development. Proposals for this budget to be presented to Full Council in September.

Key points made by Cllrs:

- Noted that some works to the Town Hall becoming more urgent e.g. roof and window replacement
- All long term commitments, outside the Town Hall, to be reviewed
- Need a planned/joined up approach to works
- S106 funding to be used to improve green spaces

RESOLVED that

1. Underspend of £24,633.97 be moved to Asset Maintenance budget
2. The report be noted

6 Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements

Members received an update on spend up to 30 June 2023. The following were noted, by exception:

- Department 3 - Community Services: Includes expenditure for Maghullfest. Income to be allocated from former Mayor fund for young people
- Department 4 - Planned Asset Maintenance: Includes expenditure on emergency

pmc

boiler works

- Department 8 - Maghull Hub. No costs to date for utilities as Landlord struggling to locate meters. Ongoing issues with BT about installation of phone line, requested on 27 January 2023. Case escalated to Bill Esterson MP.

Budgets monitored robustly

Key point raised by Cllrs:

- Noted that Council has 3 loans with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) for solar panels, lift and work in parks. Under the terms are unable to pay off early. May need to replace lift before loan paid off
- Noted that a temporary member of staff was made permanent at 14 hours per week. This was agreed by Personnel Sub Committee

Key points from discussion about Hub:

1. Victoria Law Centre (VLC) unable to accept appointments until September due to volume of casework
2. **300 referrals** received in 4 months. This does not include Cllr Surgeries as they do not complete referral forms. Awaiting latest data
3. Service has demonstrated a need in the community; most common areas for advice include PIP, Universal Credit and Blue Badge applications
4. Provision may need to be expanded
5. Postcode data shows 20% of clients from Lydiate. Perception that people outside of Maghull and Lydiate are accessing the service
6. VLC contact ends in January 2024. Service will need to go out to tender later in the year - October/November. 3 quotes will be required as contract will be over £25,000.
7. Lease signed for years. Break clause for November 2023. If lease not renewed would need an alternative site

RESOLVED that the report be noted

7 Chairman's Closing Comments

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

8 Exclusion of Press & Public

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

9 Debtors to the Council

Members were informed that the Council has a robust Debtors Policy (Note: to be circulated to Members). There is flexibility. Debtors policy not applied to current late payers as some invoices being disputed. One is a persistent late payer. The previous administration did not want to appoint a Debt Collection Agency.

Key points made by Cllrs:

- Payments should be in line with terms in leases/contracts
- Letters to be sent to those with overdue invoices, including disputed invoices

pmc

- Any services provided by MTC to be suspended pending payment
 - Projects should offer good value for money for precept/council tax payers.
- Options for Maghull Radio to be considered over the Summer

RESOLVED that

1. Debtors Policy to be circulated
2. Letters to be sent to those with overdue invoices, including disputed invoices
3. Options for Maghull Radio to be reviewed over the Summer and presented to Full Council in October
4. The report be noted

Peter McLean

27/3/24

CHAIR

