

MARKET LAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Carol Hackett, 23 Orchard Close, West Ashton. Wiltshire. BA14 6AU.

Tel: 01225 760372 or Email: clerk@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

VAT Registration Number: 296 9715 35 / Email: www.marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the **Management & Finance (M&F) Committee Meeting**
Of the Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 30th April 2024
At 7.15pm in the Old School, Market Lavington

Councillors Present: Cllr Fraser (Chairman), Cllr Osborn (arrived at 7.30pm), Cllr Davis, and Cllr Turner-Scott.

In attendance: Carol Hackett (Parish Clerk).

	AGENDA ITEM
23/24-256	Apologies for Absence None – All Councillors present (currently no appointed Chairman for HARF Committee).
23/24-257	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate There were none.
23/24-258	Adjournment for Public Participation (maximum of 5 minutes) The meeting was adjourned and resumed at 7.19pm.
23/24-259	Minutes of Council Committee meeting The minutes of the Management & Finance committee meeting held on the 5th December 2023 having been previously circulated to Councillors, were approved as a correct record - proposed Cllr Fraser, seconded Cllr Davis (Cllr Turner-Scott abstained from the voting having not been present at the previous meeting).
23/24-260	Internal Audit Report 2023/24 The Chairman referred to the report which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The report had concluded that the Council continues to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements, and therefore had not made any formal recommendations. It was however noted that care should be taken to ensure that the independent Councillor carrying out the regular quarterly finance checks is not used as a payment signatory. In light of this, it was therefore resolved to make the following recommendation to Full Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•To appoint some additional bank signatories•To receive and approve the Internal Auditors report (copy of report and Internal Audit AGAR page to be provided to all Councillors)
23/24-261	Parish Council Accounts year ending 31st March 2024 a) Having already reviewed the Internal Audit Report, members were in a position to consider the responses to be submitted on the Annual Governance Statement (section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return – AGAR). Following consideration of all the statements, it was resolved to make the following recommendation to main Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•To accept the review findings of the Management and Finance Committee and approve responding positively (Yes) to statements 1 to 8 in Section 1, the Annual Governance Statement (statement 9 refers to Trust Funds and is therefore N/A). (Copy of Annual Return to be provided to all Councillors). b) The Chairman reported that she had checked the figures quoted in the Accounting Statements (section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return – AGAR) as part of her quarterly check of the accounts, with the Internal Auditor also having checked them, as part of the year end audit. It was therefore resolved to make the following recommendation to Full Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•To approve for signing the year end figures quoted in section 2, the Accounting Statements.

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(Copy of Annual Return to be provided to all Councillors).

23/24-262

Year-end balances 2023/24

The Chairman and Clerk referred to details of the year-end balances that had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and also provided details of the costs incurred for the Canada Woods tree management work and riverbank reinforcement (copies of both documents to be provided to all Councillors) It was noted that the level of General Reserves at the year-end had equated to approx. 54% of the precept, which had been considered prudent by the Internal Auditor, and £9,951 more than at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. With all four of the main budget centres coming in under budget for the year, and the higher level of year-end general reserves, it was considered appropriate to carry forward some of the unspent revenue budget into 'Earmarked Reserve' (as per financial regulations para. 4.3). It was therefore resolved to make the following recommendation to Full Council:

- To approve carrying forward the following unspent revenue budget from 2023/24 into 'Earmarked Reserves'
 1. Unspent Old School budget to EMR for OS Projects £3,000
 2. Unspent Play Area / Footpaths / Highways budget to EMR for HRAF Projects **£3,800**
 3. PWLB payment outstanding from 2023/24 to EMR for PWLB payments £2,073
 4. Unspent Elisha Field & Pavilion budget to EMR for HRAF Projects **£1,100**

TOTAL £9,973

It was also noted that in the approved 2024/25 budget the following amounts would be transferred into Earmarked Reserves, as set up last year:

- EMR A/C code 342 - £500 from OS Budget to save up for a new boiler or any other energy saving projects as required.
- EMR A/C code 343 - £1,500 from HRAF budget to save up for resurfacing Broadwell carpark

Reference was then made to the Will bequest that the Parish Council had recently received of £36,207 which could only be used to purchase 2 acer trees, and to keep the village neat and tidy. It was considered appropriate to allocate some of the 2024/25 budget expenditure to this Restricted Reserve, thus allowing the funds to be used on other HRAF projects. It was therefore resolved to make the following recommendation to Full Council:

- To approve allocating the following 2024/25 HRAF budget expenditure to the Restricted Will Legacy Reserve
 1. Handyman contractor hours worked **£3,900**
 2. Elisha Field grass cutting contract **£1,680**
 3. Footpaths and Amenity Land contract **£3,926**

TOTAL £9,506

At the Parish Council meeting on the 20th February 2024 it was agreed that consideration would be given to allocating funds to projects from the remaining 'OS Covid LRS Support Grant' money of £3,967. It was therefore resolved to make the following recommendation to Full Council:

- To approve splitting the remaining 'OS Covid LRS Support Grant' money ' : £1,967 to OS Projects EMR and **£2,000** to HRAF Projects EMR

It was noted that the **Old School 'New projects / Equipment'** amount allocated in the 2024/25 budget was £1,809. With the additional £3,000 being carried forward into Earmarked Reserve from 2023/24 and the £1,967 allocated from the 'OS Covid LRS Support Grant' money, this would give a **total of £6,776** (likely/known projects for 2024/25 included the new Fire Alarm System – approx. cost £3,450, re-staining the wooden floor, re-pointing some of the external walls).

It was noted that the **HRAF 'New projects / Equipment'** amount allocated in the 2024/25 budget was £10,000. With the additional amounts of £3,800 and £1,100 being carried forward into

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Earmarked Reserve from 2023/24, the £9,506 of budget expenditure now allocated to the Restricted Will Legacy Reserve, and the £2,000 allocated from the 'OS Covid LRS Support Grant' money, this would give a **total of £26,406** (likely/known projects for 2024/25 included new SID for Church Street £2,393, Verti-drains of Elisha Field £1,500, repair of information board at bottom of Ladywood £500, Repair to footpath slippage on MLAV2 – approx. cost £13,500 (hopefully partly grant funded), new sports facilities (hopefully partly grant funded), and allocation of funding for the previously discussed Project Priorities.

With regards to the Parish Council Project Priorities for the next few years as discussed at the Parish Council meeting 20/2/24 (minute number 23/24-207bii), it was resolved to make the following recommendations to Full Council:

- To approve allocating the following amounts to the previously agreed projects:
 - Canada Woods Project – to include 5/10 year management plan for the woods, and possibly incorporate 'Remember COVID-19' projects within this, on the grass area adjacent to Beechwood, and within Canada Woods Riverbank reinforcement (part grant funded) – **Phase 1 of project completed, but require funds to be set-aside for review in 5-years' time and possible additional tree works (£2,000 to be allocated and transferred to EMR from 2024/25 HRAF budget)**
 - Possible outdoor gym equipment and skateboard ramps and new sports / recreation facilities as identified by the 'Sports Facilities Working Group' (grant funded if possible) – **Grant funding applications proving difficult, but still hopeful some funding can be obtained. Anticipate there will be money within the HRAF 24/25 budget to add to any grant funding obtained should it be required in order to facilitate the provision of new equipment – to keep under review**
 - Set aside money for future re-surfacing of Broadwell carpark (Market Place resurfacing and lining cost £13,780 in December 2022) (£1,500 23/24 budget) – **further £1,500 already allocated in HRAF EMR 24/25 budget – no further allocation needed**
 - Set aside money for new OS boiler or any other energy saving projects (£500 23/24 budget) – **further £500 allocated in OS EMR 24/25 budget – no further allocation needed**
 - New Speed Indicator Device Church Street (NAL socket application to LHFIG) – **Device purchased April 2024 £2,393. Contribution will need to be made towards cost of installing NAL socket - to be paid for from HRAF 24/25 budget**
 - Full review of footpaths and stiles (upgrading stiles if possible) – **To be undertaken when new footpath marker signs put up (£1,500 to be allocated from HRAF 24/25 budget)**
 - **Groundworks for Elisha Field to improve drainage (£1,500 to be paid for from HRAF 24/25 budget)**
 - **Old School – re-point exterior walls (to be paid for from OS 24/25 budget)**
 - **Additional resurfacing of Broadwell Play Area (£3,000 provisional sum) – Long-term priority – No funds to be allocated at this time**
 - **Highway infrastructure improvements – budget to be allocated when likely costs known (possible projects include – speed cushions Parsonage Lane) – to keep under review**

23/24-263

Governance, Finance & Management Risk Register half yearly review

The Chairman referred to the document which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting,

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	<p>providing an overview of the changes made to the document in December 2023. The change made to item 1, added the requirement for regular Councillor training, and members discussed how best this could be implemented – ACTIONS – Clerk to contact Wiltshire Council, WALC and Community First to enquire what training was currently available. Update to be provided to Full Council when information obtained. It was suggested that it might be appropriate to prepare a formal ‘Community Engagement’ Policy for the Parish Council. It was resolved to make the following recommendation to main Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To approve the preparation of a ‘Community Engagement’ Policy
23/24-264	<p>Other M&F Committee business</p> <p>It was questioned whether consideration should be given to operating the ‘Office 365’ package for the Parish Council – ACTIONS – Clerk to investigate further and report back to Full Council when information obtained. It was questioned whether the Old School Cleaner may require additional time to carry out the cleaning – ACTIONS – Clerk to liaise with the Cleaner and report back at May Parish Council meeting. Details were provided of a recent incident on the steps leading up to the Museum, and some measures that the Museum planned to put in place. Other ideas were then put forward by members – ACTIONS – Clerk to discuss further with Museum and report back at May Parish Council meeting. Cllr Fraser thanked everyone for their support, and noted that she would be standing down as Chair of the Committee at the May Parish Council meeting. Councillors expressed their thanks to Cllr Fraser.</p>
23/24-265	<p>Date of next Meeting</p> <p>To be arranged as required.</p>
23/24-266	<p>Closure of meeting</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.37pm.</p>