

MARKET LAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

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Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting
Of the Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 10th December 2024
At 7.15pm in the Old School, Market Lavington

Councillors Present: Cllr Poole (Chair), Cllr Stevens (Parish Council Chair), Cllr Davis (Parish Council Vice-Chair and Chair of OS Committee), and Cllr Roberts (Chair of HRAF Committee).

In attendance: In the absence of Carol Hackett (Parish Clerk) the recording of the meeting, along with notes from the committee Chair, were used to prepare the minutes.

	AGENDA ITEM
24/25-158	Apologies for Absence None - all Councillors present.
24/25-159	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate There were none.
24/25-160	Adjournment for Public Participation (maximum of 5 minutes) The meeting was adjourned and resumed at 7.16pm.
24/25-161	Minutes of Council Committee meeting The minutes of the Management & Finance committee meeting held on the 30th April 2024. Cllr Davis was the only member of the current committee who was present at the last meeting, and confirmed their accuracy (The draft minutes had already been circulated to Full Council on the 21 st of May 2024 and checked for accuracy by the then Chair of the Committee). The minutes were therefore signed as a correct record.
24/25-162	2025/26 Parish Council budget a) The committee Chair referred to his covering report circulated with the agenda papers, noting that he had met with the Clerk to consider the budget, after which a couple of revisions had been made, which represented the draft budget presented now. It was hoped that the report would be helpful to Councillors in understanding the thinking behind the Draft budget and precept requirement. He noted his proposal to the committee of recommending a budget that represented approximately a 7% increase on last year. He noted that whilst this appeared quite a large percentage increase, in real terms it represented an increase of 60p per month for a band D property. The one thing of concern was the Legacy money, which was diminishing, with approx. £10,000 being used this year to cover allowable expenditure, and a similar amount proposed to be used in the 2025/26 budget. Cllr Poole noted that had this funding not been available it would have created a lot more financial pressure on the budget, which would have resulted in the 'Projects' budget having to be reduced. He also noted the reduction in the 'Tax Base' figure for 2025/26 which is used to calculate the precept requirement, which had been caused in part by properties changing to single occupancy. Questions were invited from other committee members, who expressed their support for the draft budget. Cllr Poole referred to the accompanying report, stressing the need for maximising funding of projects through grants wherever possible, either by the Parish Council or the Community Groups. The Chair confirmed that the draft budget would keep the 'Reserves' at the current level of approx. 54% of the approved precept, which had been regarded as prudent by the Internal Auditor. The Chair referred to the proposed 'Projects' budget of £15,000 which it was hoped if grant funding could be obtained for any projects, could either be allocated to other projects, or put into 'Reserves' for when the Legacy money is all used up. The Chair noted his proposal to the Committee to submit a precept requirement of £80,132.00. It was proposed by Cllr Davis, seconded by Cllr Poole, and resolved to seek approval from Full Council for the following recommendations – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To approve the proposed draft budget for 2025/26• To approve the precept requirement for 2025/26

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	b) Review of Parish Council Priority Projects for the next few years – Deferred until December Parish Council meeting, when further consideration could be given as to which projects could potentially be funded through grant applications.
24/25-163	Parish Council Financial Regulations Review The Chair noted that the existing Financial Regulations were based on the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) model template. A new model template issued by NALC earlier this year was completely different in terms of layout and structure, and following a meeting with the Clerk it was proposed to remain with current familiar format. An exercise was then undertaken to review any changes or additions stated in the new model template, and import them into the existing document, which represented the draft document for review and consideration. Following a brief discussion it was resolved to seek approval from Full Council for the following recommendation – <ul style="list-style-type: none">To approve the amended Parish Council Financial Regulations
24/25-164	Other Finance Committee business The Chair noted that he and Clerk had undertaken a review of this year's budget to date, and currently it appeared that it was unlikely there would be any significant unspent budget that would be available to transfer across to 2025/26 into Earmarked Reserves. Cllr Stevens referred to the 'Traffic Management' project for either end of the Village and the initial dialogue with the Longfield site Developer, noting that it was hoped that this could be progressed soon.
24/25-165	Date of next Meeting To be arranged as required.
24/25-166	Closure of meeting There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.33pm.