



A MEETING of the POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Held on:	Tuesday, 6 th February 2023 at 6 pm. Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.
Members Summoned and Present:	Members summoned and present: Peter Goater (Committee Chairman), Nicholas Kellett (Committee Vice Chairman), Simon Carswell, Terry Napper, Heather Shearer, Nicola Smith, and Laura Wolfers.
Apologies: Officers Present:	Pam Birch, Neil Howiantz, Bryan Knickerbocker Zoe Leach, Responsible Finance Officer
In attendance:	Members of the public (2).

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public are invited to make representations to the Policy and Finance Committee on any matters relating to the work of the Policy and Finance Committee or to raise any issues of concern. Note: The Committee is unable to make formal decisions under this item, but items raised may be recommended for consideration at a future meeting.

A representative from Somerset Bus Partnership spoke about the work of the partnership and the requirement for financial help to support their service.

The CEO of Citizens Advice Somerset gave an overview of the work of the organisation in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for attending public question time and explained that consideration of grant applications was an agenda item for consideration in the formal part of the Committee meeting which they were welcome to stay and listen to.

The Policy and Finance Committee meeting commenced at 6:35 pm

MINUTES

50 Apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Pam Birch, Neil Howiantz, and Bryan Knickerbocker.

51 Declarations of interests and grant of dispensations
Councillors were reminded of their duty to declare any interests in the business to be transacted.
The Chairman declared an interest - agenda item 7iii- Victoria Tennis Club grant application and left the room whilst this item was discussed.

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52 Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED - The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 28th November 2023 were approved for signing as a true record of the decisions taken.

53 Responsible Financial Officer's Report

The Council received a verbal report from the Responsible Financial Officer which included updates/actions on behalf of the office. Updates included: agency worker discussions, biodiversity action plan. A review of banking options and quotations for new office computers and secondary screens - yet to be progressed. The Responsible Financial Officer advised that the Alfred Gillett Trust grant payment approved by Full Council would be paid in February.

54 Grants

Members noted the YMCA July 2023 – October 2023 quarter report.

Members received and considered the grant applications received outside of the regular application window. The Policy and Finance Committee:

- i. RESOLVED – to agree a grant award of £1,262 to Citizens Advice Somerset – to contribute to the running costs of the general advice service.
- ii. RESOLVED - to agree a grant award of £500 to Taking-the-Space CIC – towards the Taking-The-Space young actor groups annual performance showcase in Strode Theatre Studio.
- iii. RESOLVED – to reject a grant award to the Victoria Tennis Club to replace lights
- iv. RESOLVED – to agree a grant award of £300 to the Street Repair Café – for start-up costs.
- v. RESOLVED – to agree a grant award of £900 to Somerset Bus Partnership – for administration costs including printing and photocopying bus timetables and publicity materials.

55 Policies

The Policy and Finance Committee:

- i. RESOLVED – to approve the Annual Investment Strategy
- ii. RESOLVED – to approve the Fire Emergency Plan
- iii. RESOLVED – to approve the Safeguarding Policy - subject to inserting **'and Communications Policy'** at 10.5. Full Council to agree the delegated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer at 2.2.

56 Terms of Reference

The Policy and Finance Committee

- i. RESOLVED – to approve their Committee Terms of Reference, subject to amending an 'annual' review of the Council's Risk Register to 'Bi-annual'; and RECOMMEND to Full Council for adoption.
- ii. RESOLVED – to approve the Highways Committee Terms of Reference and RECOMMEND to Full Council; subject to:
 - increasing the quorum to 5 members
 - adding **'per line item'** to delegated powers to spend each financial year up to the total amount approved in the budget under Highways.
- iii. RESOLVED – to approve the Staffing Committee Terms of Reference subject to including in the committee's delegated powers the words **'within their Terms of Reference'** and RECOMMEND to Full Council for adoption.
- iv. RESOLVED – to approve the Culture and Events Committee Terms of Reference and RECOMMEND to Full Council for adoption subject to:
Event Management to read as **'To promote, encourage and** appoint volunteers ...

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Delegated Powers to read as 'Delegated Power to spend in each financial year up to the total amount budgeted for events, **per line item**, in the annual budget as agreed by Council **EXCEPT for expenditure relating to Christmas lights which MUST be approved by Full Council**.

The Committee will have delegated powers to make decisions on timelines for cultural projects and events, **as pre-agreed by Council**, and routine high street enhancement activities e.g. the sequence of banner installations.

57 Periodic Reports and Inspections

Members noted the Responsible Financial Officers report on bank transfers and reconciliations, internal control and staff mileage and hours.

58 Receipts and Payments

Members considered the quarterly income and expenditure reports circulated by the Responsible Financial Officer and considered significant variations between budgets set and expenditure. The detailed income and expenditure report by code at 31 December 2024 appears as Annex A to these minutes in the Minute Book.

RESOLVED – to close down the petty cash cashbook with RIALTAS at year end.

59 Bi-Annual Review of Risk Register

Members undertook the Bi-annual review of the Street Parish Council Risk Register and RECOMMEND to Full Council for adoption. *The Deputy Clerk/RFO to consider the layout of the Risk Register to include a hazard score pre mitigations.*

- i. RESOLVED – the annual Parish Rooms Risk Register be incorporated into the Street Parish Council Bi-Annual Risk Register
- ii. RESOLVED – officers undertake a review of the Strode Road Allotment, Street Skate Park and Merriman Park Risk Assessments, in consultation with SLH services and Merriman Park Community Group, and bring back to the May Committee Meeting for consideration and recommendation.

60 Information to raise for consideration at the next meeting

This item must be for information only. Any matter that requires a decision must be set as an agenda item at a future meeting.

- i. Items scheduled:
 - Grants Policy – *committee members to send thoughts on draft grants policy to deputy clerk/responsible financial officer for approval in May Committee meeting.*
 - Strode Road Allotment, Street Skate Park and Merriman Park Risk Assessments – *committee to review in the May Committee meeting and make any recommendations for change to Council.*
 - Biodiversity Action Plan – *a proposal from Sustainable Street Working Group – to support the Biodiversity Duty Response and Policy*

61 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee will take place at

6 pm on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.22 pm.

These minutes were adopted on 2 April 2024 under minute reference 64 as a true record of the decisions taken and are duly signed below by the chair of that meeting.

Signed: _____