



**Minutes of a Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Offices, Manor Offices, North Road, Holsworthy, on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 5.45pm.**

**Present:** Councillors; D. De ste Croix, P. Brown & J. Hutchings

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk (TC) & Assistant to the Town Clerk (ATTC)

- 1513. To Elect a Temporary Chair for Finance and General Purposes Committee.**  
Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed Councillor P. Brown to be Temporary Chair for Finance and General Purposes. This was seconded by Councillor J. Hutchings and agreed. (Unanimous)
- 1514. Apologises for absence.**  
Councillors; N. Kenneally, H. Parker.
- 1515. Declaration of Interest**  
Councillor P. Brown asked Councillors to declare any relevant interests as they arose.  
**Councillor P. Brown Declared an interest on Agenda Item 11/ Minute Number 1542.**
- 1516. Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**No quorum for minutes.**
- 1517. Matters Arising.** - To consider matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the....  
For information only.  
J hutchings soldier – TC briefed cllr. Hutchings. In hand and once price received to be actioned. If it's not in by Remembrance Day to offer to erect for Remembrance Day.
- 1518. To review the Finance & General Purposes Committee Action Plan. (Appendix 1: Action Plan)**  
No updates on the action plan.
- 1519. Accounts due for Payment and Budget Review – To examine and agree the accounts due for payment**  
TC was queried previously about reoccurring grants and grants. TC gave a brief we gave St peters fair an increase in the reoccurring grant which explains why there is an increase in the reoccurring grant. This was increased due to a request from st peters fair. Grants would be good to review when budgeting. £170 something? Overbudget on grants & reoccurring grants. Discussion ensued. The committee felt it would be beneficial for the community to increase the budgets for grants. When local organisations go for grants HTC can give a letter of support to assist their applications. TC aims to create a draft budget for November to encourage council to begin planning for the new financial year.  
Cllr d de ste croix – October – various hardware items- is this usually itemised? TC clarified that this is one invoice but the invoice is available for Councillors to view.  
Councillors suggested finding cheaper options and breaking down expenditure. Invoice from shepherds to be broken down and budgeted if to go to other budgeted expenditure items.  
Cllr. Hutchings – queried weed burner repair expense. For the amount the item is used and cost was it viable to repair. Cllr. D. De ste Croix was thankful for the works Cholwills did at Station Close and informed the committee that residents are pleased with the works.  
TC informed the committee of a training expense from July 24 that has now been paid.  
**Councillor J. Hutchings proposed the accounts for September be paid. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1520. To discuss and agree on the purchase and ongoing costs of 2 x HTC mobile phones.**

The TC provided the committee with a quote from a local IT company regarding 2 HTC mobile phones. 1 for the Office and 1 for the Maintenance Operative(MO). TC advised the committee that 2 HTC mobile phones to improve compliance. As the Maintenance Operative is an employee but is using a personal phone for work related ingoing and outgoing communications such as with contractors and the office. The committee did not feel it was necessary to purchase a phone for the Maintenance Operative. Discussion ensued. The committee suggested giving the MO a radio system. Councillors discussed the procurement of a mobile phone for council business, considering liability, the need to separate professional and personal communication, data security, professionalism, and ensuring efficiency and urgency for work-related calls. The importance of transparency and accountability in council communications was highlighted. Cllr. J. Hutchings queried the use of Acuiti, suggesting alternatives, such as a lower-cost phone, and whether a contract was necessary given projected usage. Cllr. Hutchings also inquired about compatibility with Windows. Councillors debated contract options versus pay-as-you-go, reviewing costs for mobile devices and service plans to ensure the best value for the Council.

**Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed the phone costing £225 with unlimited communications if compatible with relevant applications and be approved. . This was seconded by Councillor P. Brown and agreed. (2 For, 1 Against, 0 Abstentions)**

Councillors discussed the purchase of a second phone for the MO. The TC noted that a work phone would be important for lone working safety as previously considered by a former clerk. Cllr. J. Hutchings expressed concerns about the requirement for an additional phone for the MO and requested the relevant legislation for a phone for the MO. Cllr. D. De ste Croix suggested exploring time management software to evaluate hours dedicated to specific duties (e.g., parks & markets) and requested that this be reviewed at the next meeting. The TC cautioned that implementing software could imply a lack of trust in employees and potentially increase their workload. Discussion ensued. Cllr Hutchings mentioned that monitoring hours in certain location could help address past complaints regarding time allocation.

**1521. To agree on the Virement for the payment of Stanhope Close works. (correction / Station Close)**

Cllr. Hutchings did the MO complete any work to increase the virement to cover his costs and utilise the funds set aside for station close. Discussion ensued. To be deferred to the next F&GP

Cllr. Hutchings suggested utilising the funds for the MO's hours every 3 months or longer could come out of the earmarked reserves.

**1522. To agree and approve, if appropriate, approaching Westwood housing about leasing Land for Allotments**

Councillors discussed Cllr. N. Kenneally's allotment projects and were provided with brief notes regarding the next steps of the project. Cllr. N. Kenneally has been in contact with Westward Housing regarding the potential of having allotments on the former play park at Glebelands. There would be 6 allotments on half of the land. Councillors discussed the proposed project.

**Councillor J. Hutchings proposed the Westward Housing can be approached regarding leasing Land for Allotments at Glebelands and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1523. To agree Virement for payment of Ground Maintenance works at HYFC pitch Stanhope Park**

Cllr. J. Hutchings asked for clarification as the pitch in Stanhope Park is not the HYFC as it is the Stanhope Park Pitch. Cllr. Hutchings also mentioned to the committee that the agreement made when money (52K) was granted to Torridge for the MUGA at Stanhope Park. The agreement made was based on the provisions that HASP were managing that. TC to follow up with Adrian Avery and Cllr. L. Piper regarding HTC's funding for the MUGA/Playzone project. Virement to await further information.

**1524. Outsourcing payroll to an external company**

The TC provided councillors with a quote for outsourcing payroll and gave brief notes of the benefits of outsourcing HTC's Staff payroll to an external company. Discussion ensued.

**Councillor J. Hutchings proposed the Payroll is outsourced to AB Accountancy and be approved. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and agreed. (2 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against)**

**1525. Town Clerk's Report**

TC I've been doing a lot of work with Scribe. I've had a demo. I did get a quote from them but I am still doing research before I present it to you. Tc informed cllrs that we do not need to begin from the start of the financial year and can be implemented immediately. TC will struggle with this as it's another thing to learn. Cllr. Hutchings asked if it is worth getting scribe set up with. F&GP committee recommended it to go to Full Council for agreement. Cllr. Hutchings, storage could be a separate budgeted item.

**1526. Close**

Councillor P. Brown closed the meeting at 19:18

Signed.....

Date .....

## FINANCE & GP ACTION LIST AS AT 16.10.24

ACTION	UPDATE	COMPLETED
To consider the hire of Drone services to produce a promotional film of the town.	Meeting held with Drone operator. Draft film to be circulated via Teams  Further meeting to be held with Drone operator re progress.	Drone operator to compile videos after Holsworthy Carnival and send draft to Committee.
Meeting with Play equipment suppliers re play equipment improvements/repairs	Play equipment companies contacted visits are being booked in. Two visits completed so far. One visit due 27.06.24 and a comparison table will be drafted to go to Parks Committee.	As decided at Parks Committee on 11 <sup>th</sup> Sept, office to revisit this action from the beginning.
16.10.24 – Add to the next Agenda: Election of new F&GP Chair & September Minutes for Signing.		Completed

## Prioritised Projects

16.10.24

Project	UPDATE	COMPLETED
No.1 Sun Lounge	Gone to tender	
No.2 Christmas Working Group	Date set, vendors being booked, Awards for all has been applied for and next meeting: 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 15:30 in Manor Offices.	In progress
No.3 Remembrance Meeting	Completed	Completed 30.09.24
No.4 VE Day for 2025	In progress	
No.5 Holsworthy 44 Soldier	In Progress	Memorial Hall to clear area for Maintenance Operative to concrete the soldier. Parks suggested asking Rev. Alison if H44 soldier could be temporarily erected at the Remembrance Day event. MO to cost the concrete prior to erection.
No.6 Hardware Upgrade	2 laptops and 1 PC set up in manor offices.	Completed
For information HYFC Pitch Improvement	In progress – phase one complete	Phase one has been completed.