



# UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the Upton by Chester and District Parish Council's Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 January 2024, 6.30pm, at Upton Pavilion, Wealstone Lane, Upton, Chester.**

**Present:** Cllr J Ebo, Cllr R Lee, Cllr S Stanley and Cllr H Wilman (Chairperson).

**In attendance:** Suzi Bull (Clerk/Proper Officer).

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lingard.

**Resolved: noted.**

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **3. MINUTES.**

**Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2023 were signed by the Chairperson.**

## **4. CLERK'S REPORT.**

**Resolved: The report from the Clerk was received and noted.**

A progress update on procuring a new Internal Auditor was received. The appointment of an IA is required as soon as possible to carry out an interim review prior to signing off the Annual Governance and Accountability Return by the end of June.

**Resolved: The list of potential auditors so far will be expanded and firms will be contacted for the purpose of checking suitability and availability. This item will be brought back to the February Finance Committee meeting with further information and for a decision and a recommendation to be put to the full Parish Council.**

## **5. ACCOUNTS REPORT.**

The committee received a list of Receipts and Payments for December.

**Resolved: The Clerk will amend the reports to include payroll sums as a total amount.**

The Clerk reported that a budget variance report was not available and that the current process for producing the report is time-consuming and unnecessarily complicated.

**Resolved: The Clerk will review the budget variance report format and produce a simplified version. In order to reduce the time spent on the production of the report, the Chairperson will write a short narrative to be included with the report, in place of a line by line explanation of variances.**

### Bank Account Statement

DATE	BANK	ACC TYPE	NOTICE	BALANCE	INT RATE %	INT REC	FSCS protected
31.12.23	Virgin Money	Current	Zero	160888.28	3.75	530.03	Yes
31.12.23	Unity Trust	Savings Acc	Zero	100	2.75	0.08	Yes

\* Up to £85,000

**Resolved: The bank account statement was received and noted.**

It was noted that in line with Financial Regulation 2.2 the accounts reconciliation report is to be signed at least once per quarter by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

**Resolved: The Finance Committee Chairperson will work with the Clerk to review the end of month accounting process ahead of signing off the reconciliation report.**

### 6. BUDGET 2024/25.

The Committee reviewed the latest and revised edition of the draft budget. Following a line by line examination, some further adjustments were agreed.

**Resolved: The Chairperson will make the final amendments to the draft budget. Draft a rationale for the proposed budget and precept increase.**

**The Finance Committee will recommend the final budget to the full Council for approval on 15 January.**

### 7. VAT.

Members of the committee received information regarding the Council's VAT liability. It has become apparent that due to income from the Pavilion shop, the Parish Council will need to register for VAT and some historical years VAT may be due to HMRC.

The Chairperson and the Clerk have consulted with a VAT professional who has provided a quotation for a review of the Council's accounts and processes.

**Resolved: The Finance Committee recommends to the Council the appointment of The Parkinson Partnership to carry out the VAT review at a cost of £750.**

### 8. SMALL GRANTS POLICY.

A requirement to review the Small Grants Policy has been previously identified.

**Resolved: As a member of the Community Engagement Committee the Chairperson will review the current Small Grants Policy and provide a report for the Community Engagement Committee to consider at its meeting in January.**

The current policy is still in place with a sum of £1,000 available.

**Resolved: The Clerk will advertise the scheme on the Parish Council website and social media. Applications received will be reviewed by the Community Engagement Committee.**

### 9. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING.

**Resolved: The date and time of the next meeting will be 12 February at 6.30pm. The Employment Committee meeting will be at 7.45pm.**

Meeting closed at 20.20pm

DRAFT