

**LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES  
COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON 23 MAY 2024**

---

**PRESENT:** Councillors Harvey, Howells & Newsham.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Angela Price – Town Clerk  
Sophie Jarvis – Minute Taker

**F152. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hughes.

**F153. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None received.

**F154. NOLAN PRINCIPLES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

**F155. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present.

**F156. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF AN  
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL  
PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 MARCH 2024**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee held on 21 March 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**F157. TO REVIEW THE ACTION SHEET**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the action sheet be received and noted.
2. That minute no. F109.3 be removed from the action sheet, noting the explanation provided by Councillor Harvey in respect of the issues that had been experienced by the Registry Office in past years.



**F158. INVOICES FOR PAYMENT**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the invoices for payment in the sum of £6,867.56 (plus VAT) be approved.
2. That the Market Stall electricity be monitored due to increasing prices to ensure that the Council are charging the appropriate amount to traders.

**F159. TO RECEIVE THE RECORD OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR MARCH AND APRIL 2024**

Members attention was brought to the following error within the receipts and payments:

Page 1071 – first item listed – it was noted that the card machine rental cost for the month had been posted to the wrong nominal code.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the receipts and payments for March and April 2024 be received and noted.
2. That the Accounts Clerk be asked to make the necessary amendments as listed above.

**F160. TO RECEIVE THE BALANCE SHEET AND TRIAL BALANCE FOR MONTHS 12 and 1**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the balance sheet and trial balance for months 12 and 1 be received and noted.
2. That the Clerk speak to the Tour Guide Leader about recording stock in the Painted Room and that this be provided to the next meeting of Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee.

**F161. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS 1 – 30 APRIL 2024**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Budget Monitoring Reports 1 – 30 April 2024 be received and noted.
2. That the Clerk investigate whether 108/4122 Electricity is for a 3-month period.



3. That the Clerk check whether the payment made in respect of '4014 Lengthsman Scheme/P3 Scheme' under '125 Green Spaces Maintenance' is for works completed the 2024/25 financial year.
4. Members requested that Ledbury in Bloom (115/4650) be moved within the budgets to 214/4650 Grants with Powers.
5. That the Clerk be instructed to write to Community Action Ledbury to request a grant feedback report.
6. That the Clerk investigate whether the payment to Buses 4us has been coded incorrectly, due to the unspecified grants budget showing an overspend.
7. That Members be provided with a breakdown of 401/4482 website.
8. That the Grants report needs fully checking and recoded accordingly.
9. That the Clerk contact Rialtas to determine whether reports could be downloaded into Excel.

**F162. TO CONFIRM VERIFICATION OF BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS FOR MARCH AND APRIL 2024**

**RESOLVED:**

That it be noted that the bank statements and reconciliations for March and April 2024 had been signed by the Chairman of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

**F163. TO RECEIVE YEAR END REPORTS TO 31 MARCH 2024**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Year End Reports for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 be received and noted.

**F164. TO REVIEW COUNCIL RESERVES FOR 2024/25**

Members were advised that concerns had been raised by Rialtas at the year-end that the Council's General Reserve is currently very low, and that the Council should consider movements from the Earmarked Reserves to the General Reserve.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council Reserves for 2024/25 report be received and noted.





## RECOMMENDATION:

That the following recommendations be submitted to Full Council for approval:

1. That £37,442.92 be moved from Earmarked Reserves to General Reserve as detailed below:

From Earmarked Reserve	To General Reserve
320 – EMR General	112.92
321 and 327 – Recreation ground equipment and Play/Skate Park	20,330
325 – Elections	5,000
332 – Climate Change	2,000
328 – War Memorial	10,000
<b>Total Movement From EMR To General Reserve</b>	<b>37,442.92</b>

2. That the following earmarked reserves be amalgamate:

Listed Buildings incorporate

- War Memorial
- Perimeter Wall Cemetery

Amenity and Public Spaces

- Recreation Ground/Play/Skate Park
- Charter Market Improvements
- Paths, Bins and Benches
- CCTV

Community Projects

- Traffic Management
- Elections
- Youth Support

3. That the £5,000 underspend for the Youth Drop-in support (CC214/NC4870) be moved to 326 Youth Support.
4. That the Internal Auditor be asked whether the Council is making reasonable and sufficient provision to their earmarked reserves year on year.

## F165. AUDIT REPORTS

Members were requested to give consideration to the 2023/24 Audit Reports provided as a result of the year end close down, and Internal Auditor year-end visit.

As part of the consideration of these reports Members considered whether the Council had put in place and maintained a system of internal control throughout

the 2023/24 financial year, following which they recommended the Statement of Control for approval by Full Council at their meeting on 6 June 2024.

Councillor Harvey asked whether the additional report that Council had requested the Internal Auditor had been received, it was noted that this had been received and reported to council and system put in place were appropriate.

Members asked whether there were internal control systems in place in respect of procurement of goods and services. The Clerk advised that there is a control system in place that all staff are aware of and that is being followed, which provides a method for checking invoices received against purchase orders and goods/services provided, which both the Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk are following.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. That all relevant documents be submitted to a meeting of Council scheduled for 6 June 2024.**
- 2. That the Negative Response from the Internal Auditor and the reasons for this given within the letter be noted and included in the letter from Ledbury Town Council to the External Auditor accordingly.**
- 3. That the draft letter provided by the Clerk, to be sent to the External Auditor when submitting the 2023/24 documents be approved.**
- 4. That Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee consider the Internal Auditor Observations, noting that the Clerk has provided a Draft Investment Strategy for consideration and approval.**
- 5. That Members note the explanation of significant variations from between the 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024 in Section 2 “The Statement of Accounts”.**
- 6. That the Town Mayor be authorised to sign the Statement of Control, as provided by the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer.**
- 7. That Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 be approved and signed, noting the comment from the Internal Auditor that they should return a negative response in respect of Assertion 3, noting the responses as below:**
  - 1. We have put in place arrangements for the effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements - YES**
  - 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness – YES**



3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances – NO
  4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of elector's rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations – YES
  5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
  6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems – YES
  7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external auditors – YES
  8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the Parish Meeting and, where appropriate, have included them in our accounting statements – YES
8. That Section 2 – Accounting Statements for 2023/24 be approved and signed.
  9. That the Draft Investment Strategy be approved.

**F166. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(x)**

**RESOLVED**

That Standing Order 3(x) be suspended for a period of 30 minutes to enable the remaining business of the agenda to be completed.

**F167. GRANT APPLICATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That a recommendation be submitted to the next Full Council meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday, 6 June 2024 that the following grants be awarded from the 2024/25 budget.

**LEAF – Ledbury Youth Survey - £500.00**

**F168. GRANT FEEDBACK REPORT – LEDBURY PLACES**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Grant Feedback Report from Ledbury Places be received and noted with thanks.
2. That the Clerk contact Ledbury Places to ask for permission to publish this in the next issue of the Town Council Newsletter.

**F169. RESPONSE FROM MALVERN HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP**

**RESOLVED:**

That Malvern Hills AONB Partnership be advised that in order to received grant funding from Ledbury Town Council they must submit a Grant Application Form, which will be considered via the same process of all other grant applications.

**F170. NEW MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (NALC)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the New Model of Financial Regulations (NALC) be deferred to the next Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting schedule for Thursday, 25 July 2024.

**F171. REQUEST FROM LEDBURY FOODBANK**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the request from Ledbury Food Bank for the provision on dog poo bags be granted and that they be given 25% of stock ordered.
2. That this be included in the next issue of the Town Council Newsletter.

**F172. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is scheduled for Thursday, 25 July 2024.

The meeting ended at 9:13pm

Signed .....

(Chairman)

Date.....

25 July 2024.

